



THUNDERBOLTS[®]

NO MERCY

"This book remains one of
pure, violent fun."

— ComicVine.com

PAUL
DIAZ
ISRAEL
SILVA

SOULE

MARVEL
NOW!

BARBERI
LUQUE

VOL
4

No Mercy #1

THE HUNDREDS

CHARLES SOULE

CARLO BARBERI

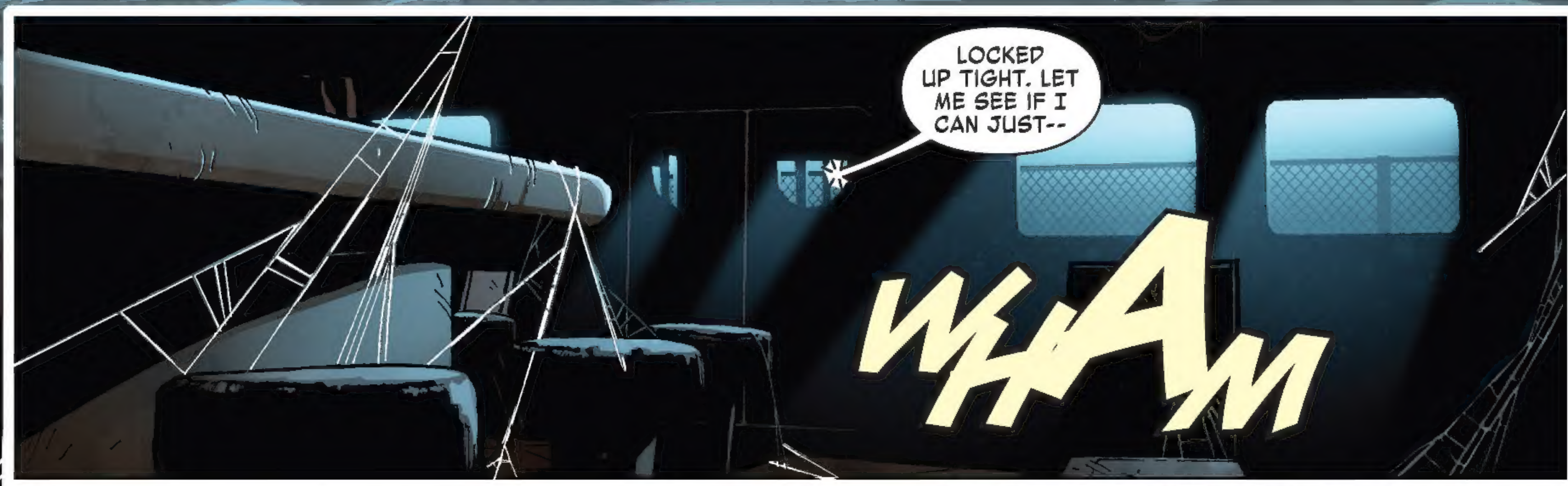
ALL-NEW
MARVEL
NOW!

020.
NOW

**NORTHERN MICHIGAN.
THE PETOSKEY STONE DINER.**

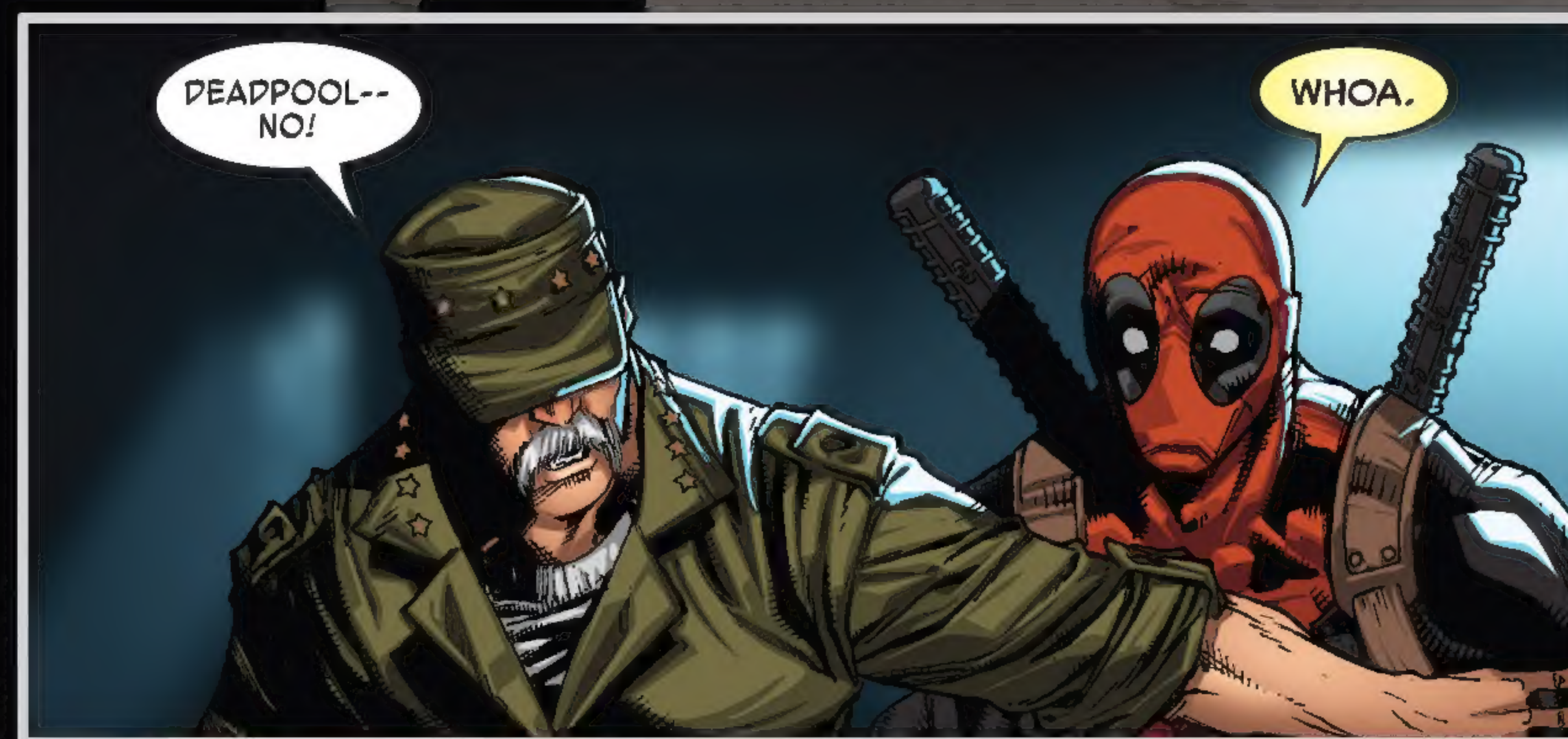
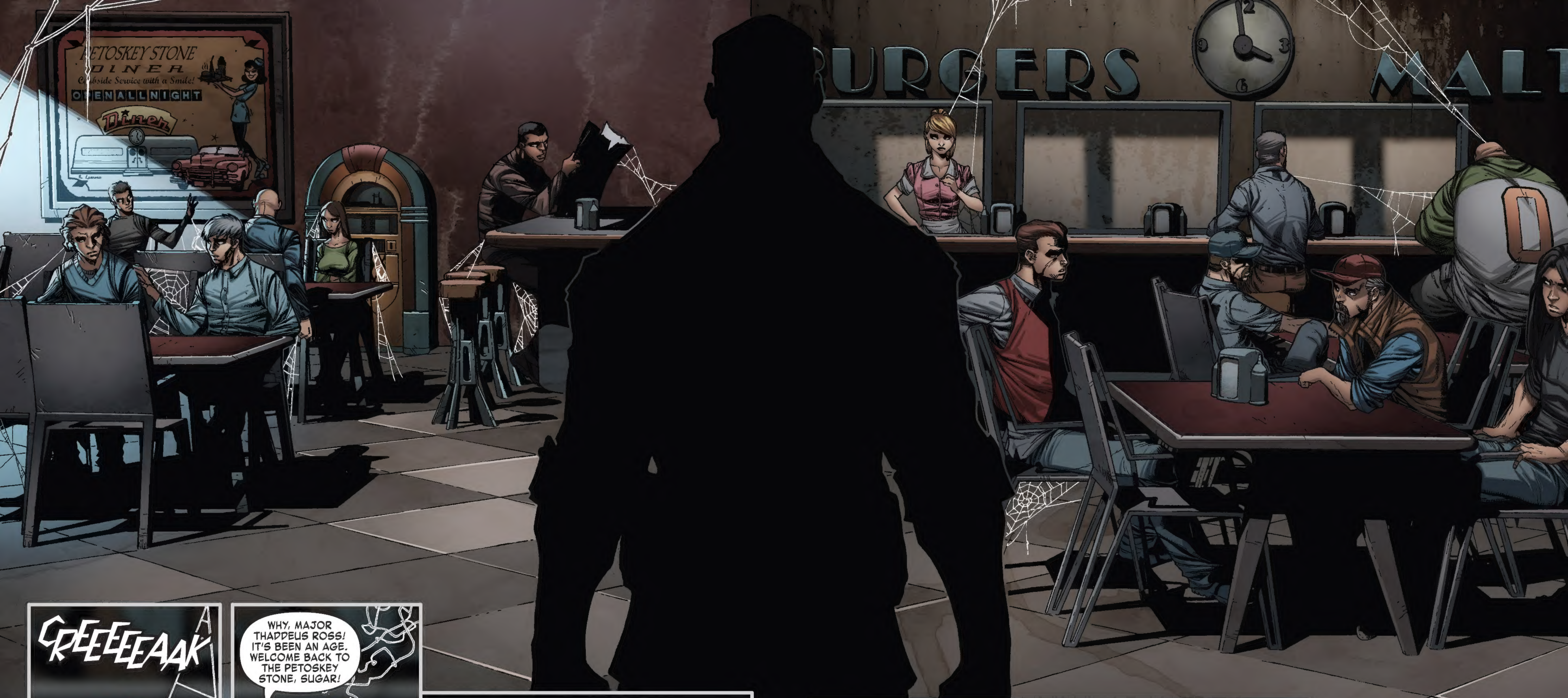
CLOSED.

"GIVE ME A MINUTE
TO CHECK THIS
OUT."



HUH.













WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

RESEARCH, CASTLE, LIKE I SAID. IT'S WHERE THE GOVERNMENT USED TO BRING ALL THE SALVAGED TECH-- OR ANYTHING ELSE THEY FOUND-- AFTER THE END OF A BIG SUPER-FIGHT. COSMIC WHATSITS TEND TO DROP INTERESTING GEAR.

THEY'D TRY TO REVERSE-ENGINEER IT HERE. NEW INNOVATIONS FOR THE GOOD OLD U.S. OF A.

SUCH AS?

PUT IT THIS WAY: AMERICAN CHEESE ISN'T ACTUALLY AMERICAN. IT'S NOT EVEN FROM EARTH.



PLEASE--CAN WE HURRY? I HAVE TO CONNECT. I'M...DRIFTING. I'M AFRAID I'M GOING TO LOSE MYSELF.



THERE'S NO INTERNET HERE, STERNS. THE PLACE WAS ON A SECURE NETWORK. INTERNAL ONLY.



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

YOU KNOW I HAVE TO CONNECT TO MY EXTERIOR MIND ON A REGULAR BASIS, EVER SINCE THAT CREATURE ATTACKED ME IN NEW YORK. IF I DO NOT, I WILL LITERALLY LOSE MY MIND.

I CANNOT CONNECT WITHOUT THE INTERNET.

WHY DID YOU BRING ME HERE?

BECAUSE YOUR CONCERNS ARE NOT NECESSARILY MY CONCERNS.

THIS PLACE HAS EXTERNAL COMMS-- YOU CAN USE THOSE TO CONNECT. THE TECH HERE IS TWENTY YEARS OLD, BUT THE MILITARY WAS USING THE NET EVEN THEN.

FINE. WHERE IS THE COMMUNICATIONS SUITE?

YOU'VE GOT A JOB TO DO FIRST.

WHAT? I'M NOT MUCH FOR MURDERING ROBOTS, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU NEED.



NO, BUT THERE IS A DEACTIVATED GAMMA REACTOR THAT NEEDS A LITTLE TLC. COMMS WON'T WORK UNTIL IT GETS POWERED UP. IT'S DOWN THAT WAY.

AND, STERNS--I'D HURRY IF I WERE YOU.

WE WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO LOSE YOUR MIND.

BARRACKS ARE OVER THERE. EVERYONE FIND A SPOT TO BUNK DOWN. STASH YOUR GEAR, AND THEN WE'LL MEET BACK HERE IN TWENTY.

WE HAVE THINGS TO TALK ABOUT.





THIS IS TINY.
WE'RE GOING TO
HAVE TO GET
CREATIVE.

FINE
BY ME.



WHY ARE
YOU STILL HERE,
CASTLE?

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?



I MEAN YOUR
MISSION IS COMPLETE.
YOUR WHITE WHALE IS DEAD.
YOU DON'T NEED THIS TEAM
ANYMORE. WHAT IS
KEEPING YOU HERE?

THAT WAS THE
DEAL. IF MY MISSION
HAD COME UP LAST, I'D
HAVE EXPECTED YOU TO
BE THERE TO HELP
ME GET IT DONE.

I'M NOT GOING
TO LEAVE JUST
BECAUSE I GOT
WHAT I WANTED.

YOU AND THE
FREAK WITH THE ALIEN
COSTUME HELPED ME
KILL THE PAGUROS. I'LL
STAY UNTIL YOU
TWO GET YOURS.

AND DEADPOOL.
HE HELPED TOO,
IN HIS WAY.

...
AND...
DEADPOOL.



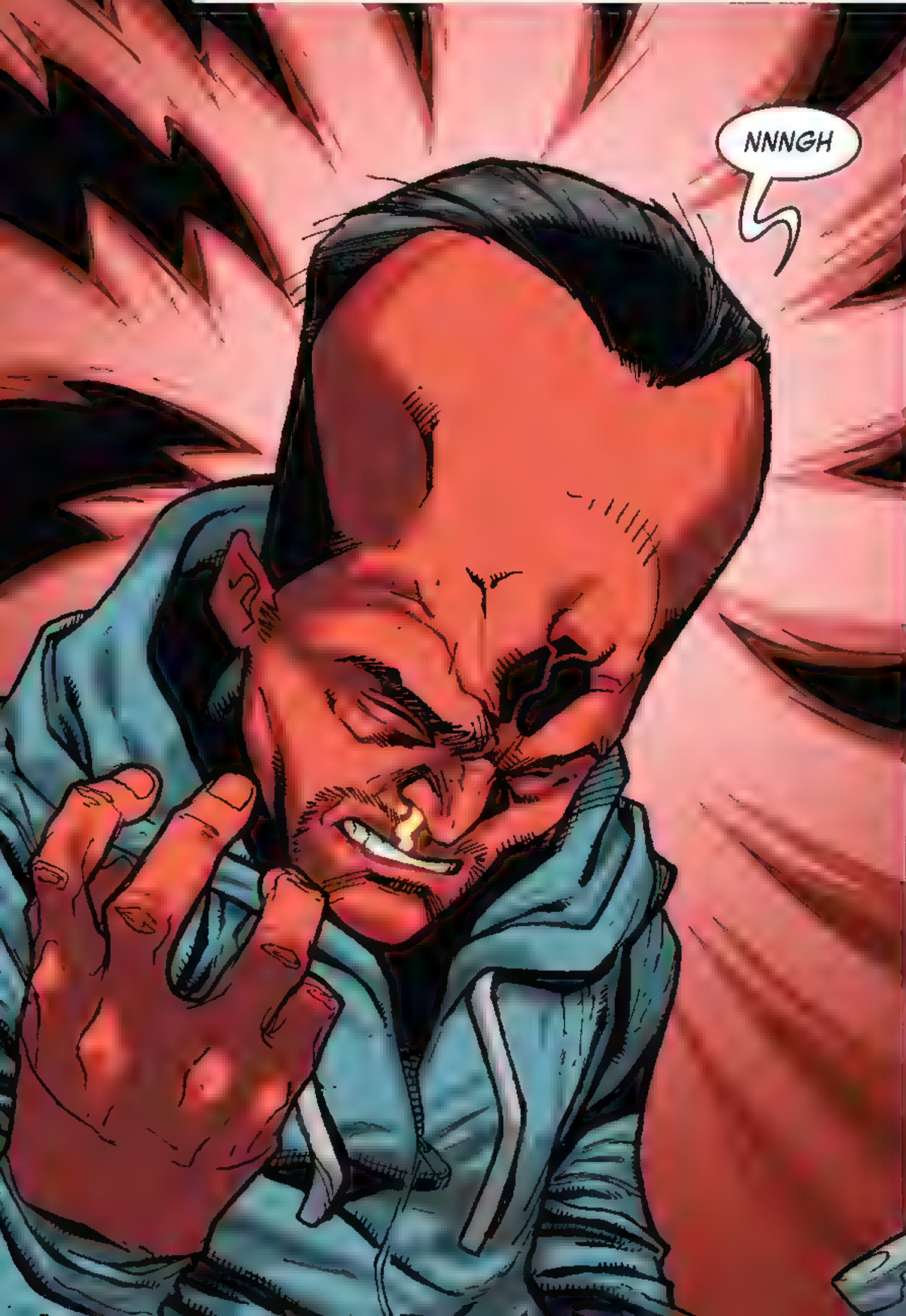
HURRY,
SAMUEL. HURRY.
FIX THIS WHILE
YOU STILL CAN.



PIECE OF JUNK.
ALMOST NO SHIELDING
AT ALL BACK THEN. I'M
SURPRISED THERE AREN'T
HULKS AND ABOMINATIONS
ON EVERY STREET
CORNER.



AHH, HERE WE
ARE. CORRODED. I
START THIS REACTOR UP
AND IT'S JUST A MATTER OF
TIME BEFORE IT BLOWS
THIS FACILITY A MILE
INTO THE AIR.



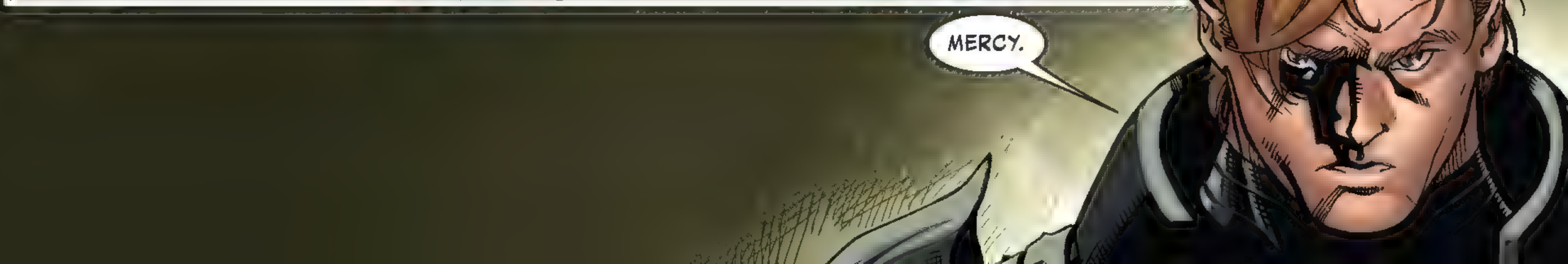
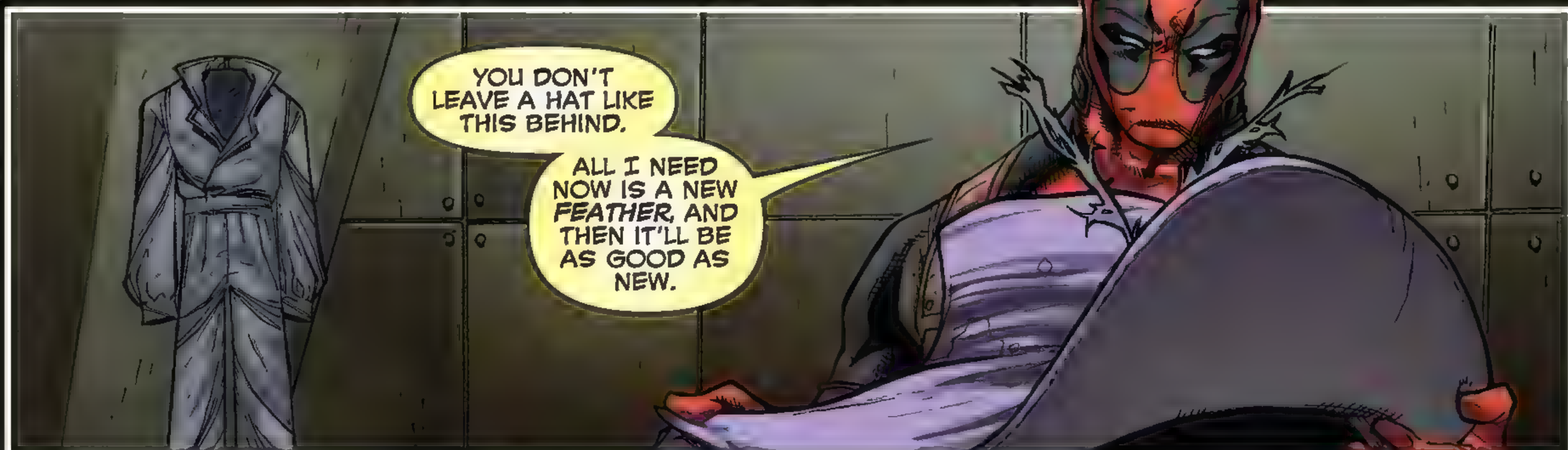
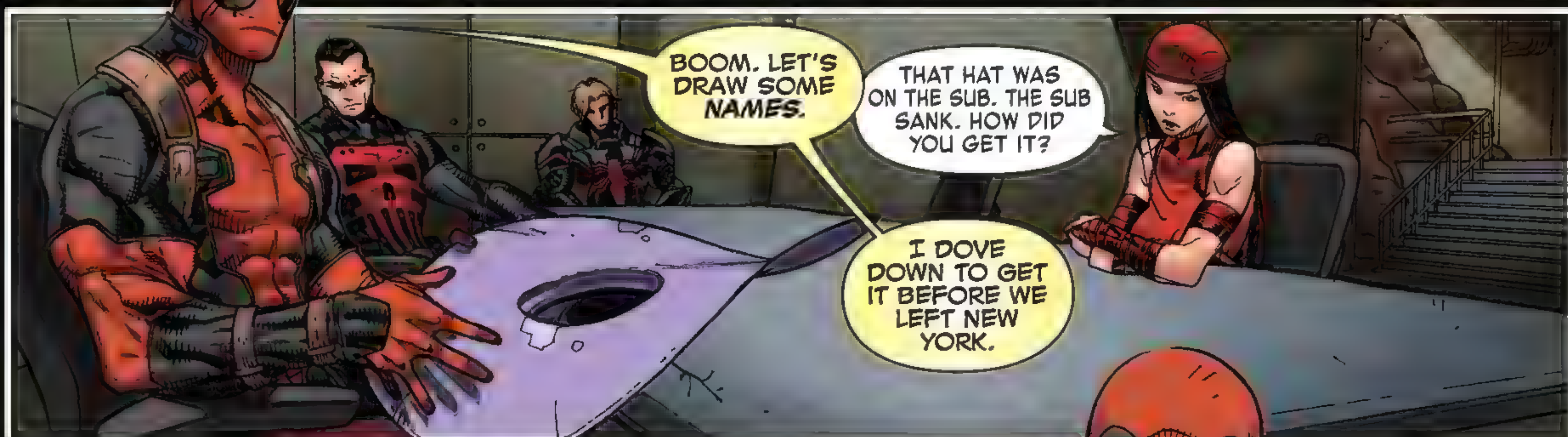
NNNGH



OHH,
SAMUEL. THIS IS
NOT GOOD.



NOT
GOOD AT
ALL.



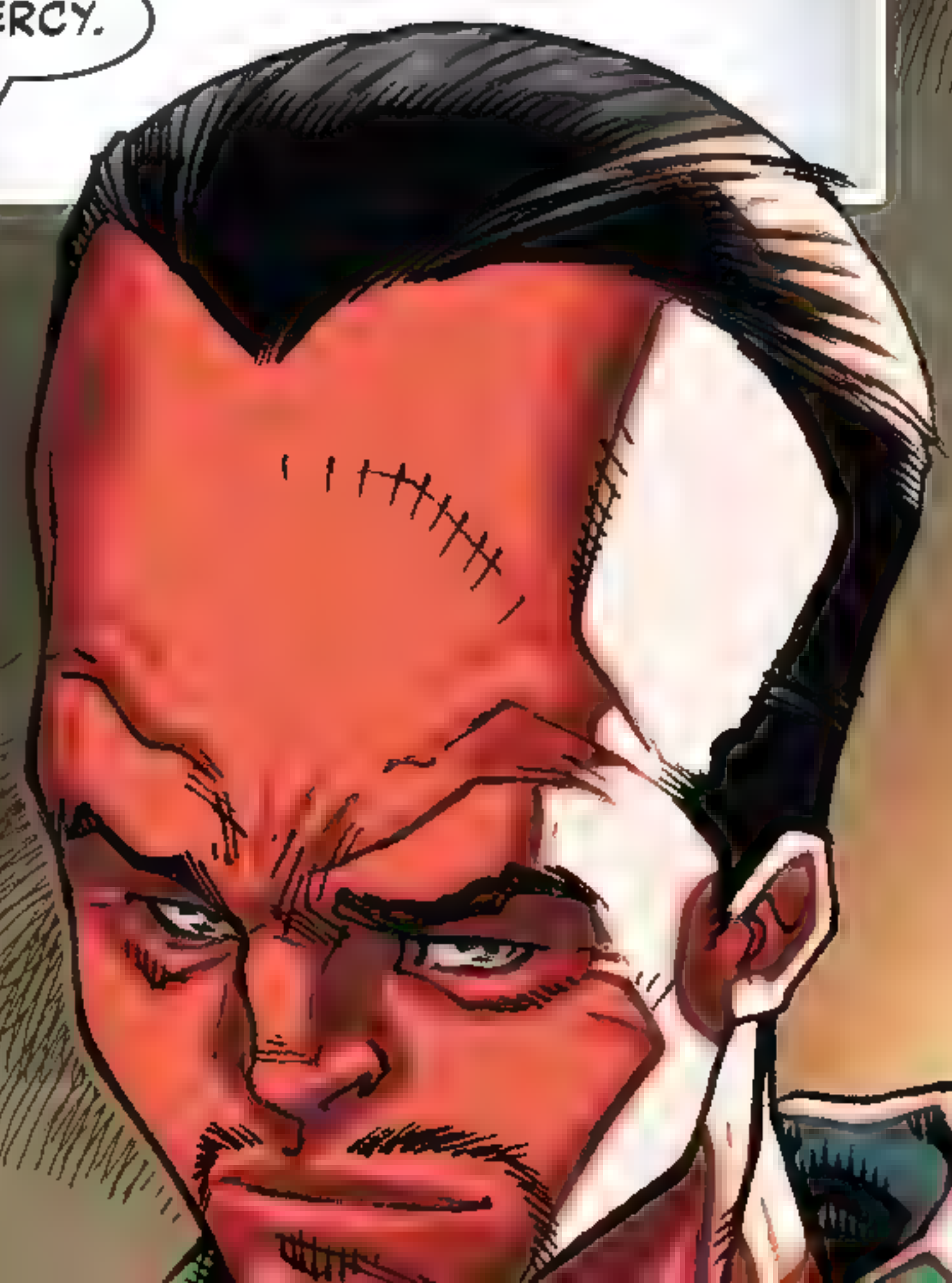
"THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I THOUGHT SHE COULD BE AN ASSET TO THIS TEAM, BUT YOU ALL KNOW WHAT SHE DID IN NEW YORK, AND YOU KNOW WHAT I PROMISED HER TO GET HER TO STOP."

"SHE ALMOST DESTROYED THE CITY. SHE NEEDS TO BE ENDED."

"I AGREE, CASTLE. YOU KNOW WHAT SHE'S CAPABLE OF. YOU HAVE ANY BRIGHT IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO KILL HER, YOU LET ME KNOW."



MERCY? SHE'S EASY TO HANDLE.





OH, REALLY?
WHAT DO YOU
SUGGEST,
STERNS?

SHE THINKS SHE'S
THE GODDESS OF MERCY,
RIGHT? SHE'S HAPPIEST WHEN
SHE'S SURROUNDED BY PEOPLE
SEEKING THE SWEET RELEASE
OF DEATH.

I CAN UNDERSTAND
WHY WE APPEAL TO
HER. PUNISHER ALONE HAS
PROBABLY KILLED MORE
PEOPLE THAN CHOLERA.
NO OFFENSE, FRANK.



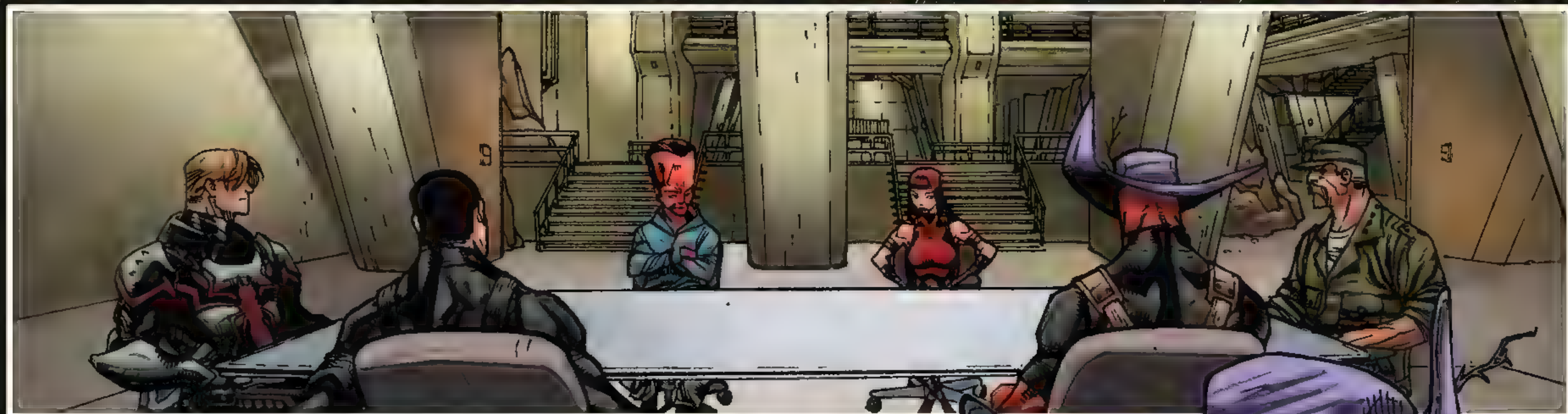
NONE
TAKEN.

ALL WE HAVE
TO DO IS POINT HER
TOWARDS THE PLACE WITH
THE HIGHEST CONCENTRATION
OF PEOPLE PRAYING FOR
OBLIVION AND SHE'LL
LEAVE US ALONE.



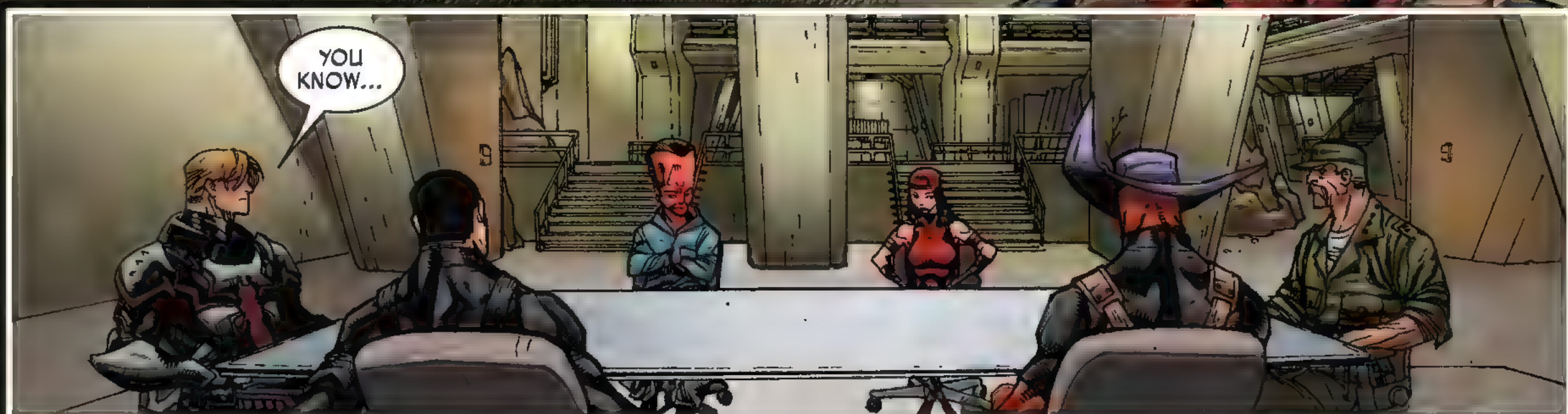
DO YOU HAVE A
SUGGESTION, OR ARE
YOU GOING TO KEEP
TELLING US THINGS WE
ALREADY KNOW? WHERE
DO YOU THINK WE
SHOULD SEND HER?

HELL,
THADDEUS.
STRAIGHT TO
HELL.



THAT'S...
ACTUALLY A
PRETTY GOOD
IDEA.

BUT
HOW ARE WE
SUPPOSED
TO GET HER
THERE?



YOU
KNOW...

"...WE ACTUALLY
MIGHT KNOW A
GUY."

NEVADA.
HOOVER DAM.

WE'RE HERE WITH
WORLD-FAMOUS
MOTORCYCLE STUNT RIDER
JOHNNY BLAZE, JUST MINUTES
AWAY FROM HIS ATTEMPT TO
JUMP HOOVER DAM--THE
SINGLE LONGEST CYCLE
JUMP EVER ATTEMPTED AT
NEARLY 800 FEET.

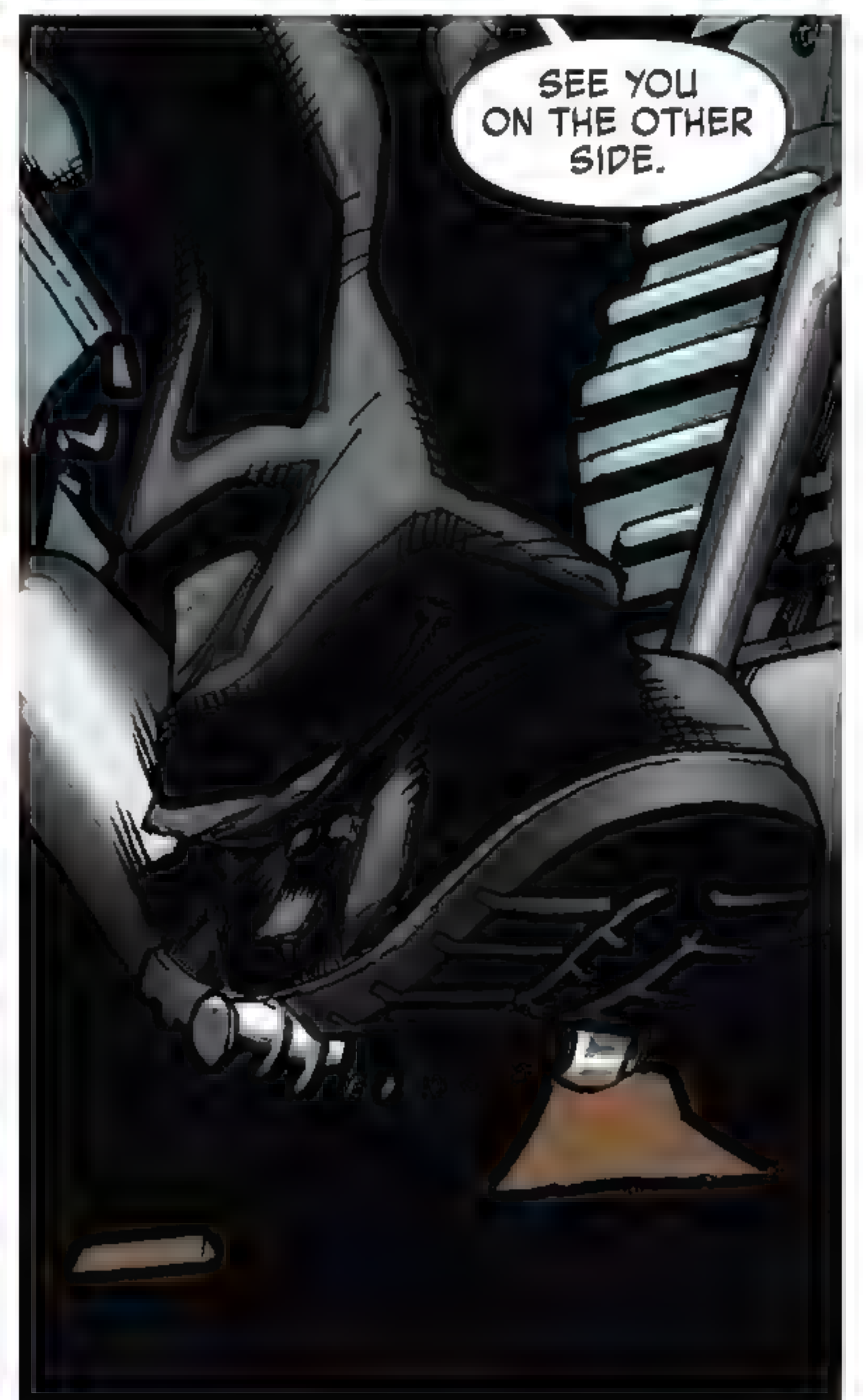
JOHNNY, THIS
JUMP IS MORE THAN
TWICE AS LONG AS THE
PREVIOUS RECORD. MANY
OF YOUR COLLEAGUES IN THE
STUNT RIDER COMMUNITY
HAVE CALLED YOU SUICIDAL
TO EVEN ATTEMPT IT.

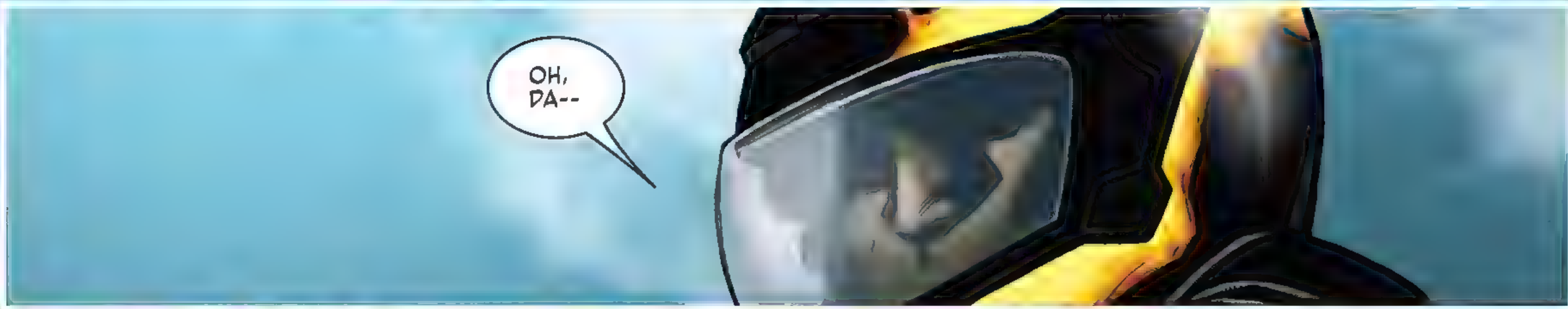
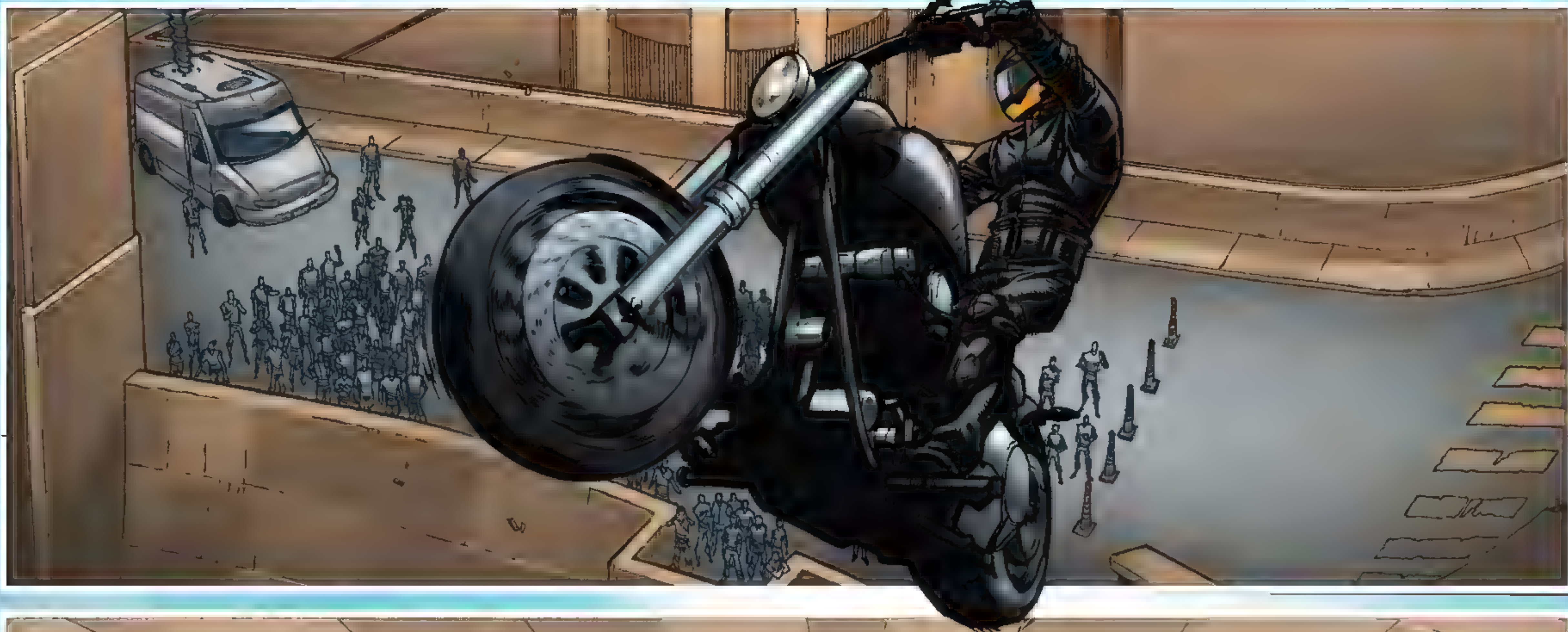
WHAT IS YOUR
RESPONSE TO THAT,
AND HOW DO YOU ANSWER
THOSE SAYING YOU'RE JUST
DOING THIS TO DRAW ATTENTION
AWAY FROM YOUR FAILED
EFFORTS TO BECOME A
HOLLYWOOD STAR?



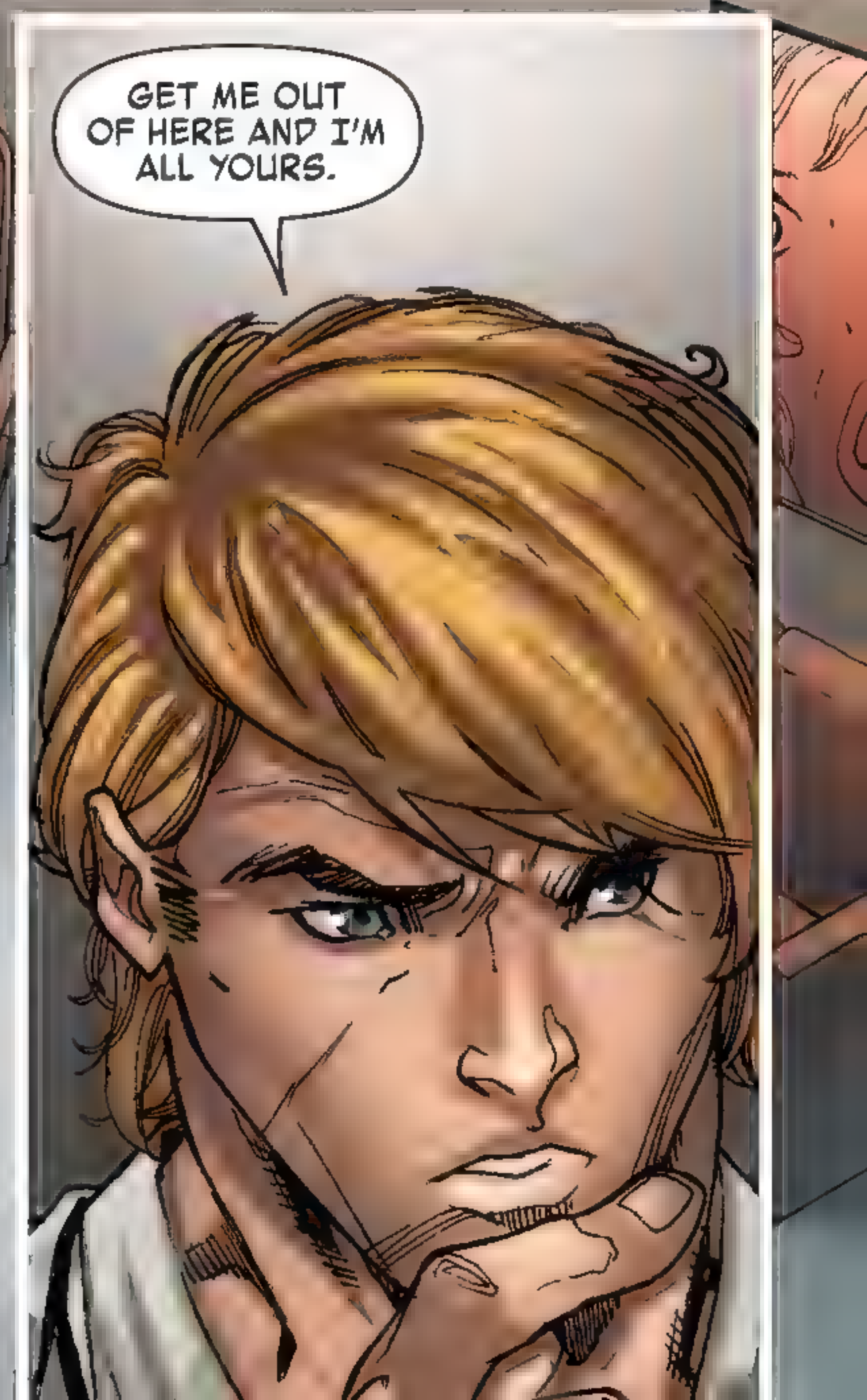
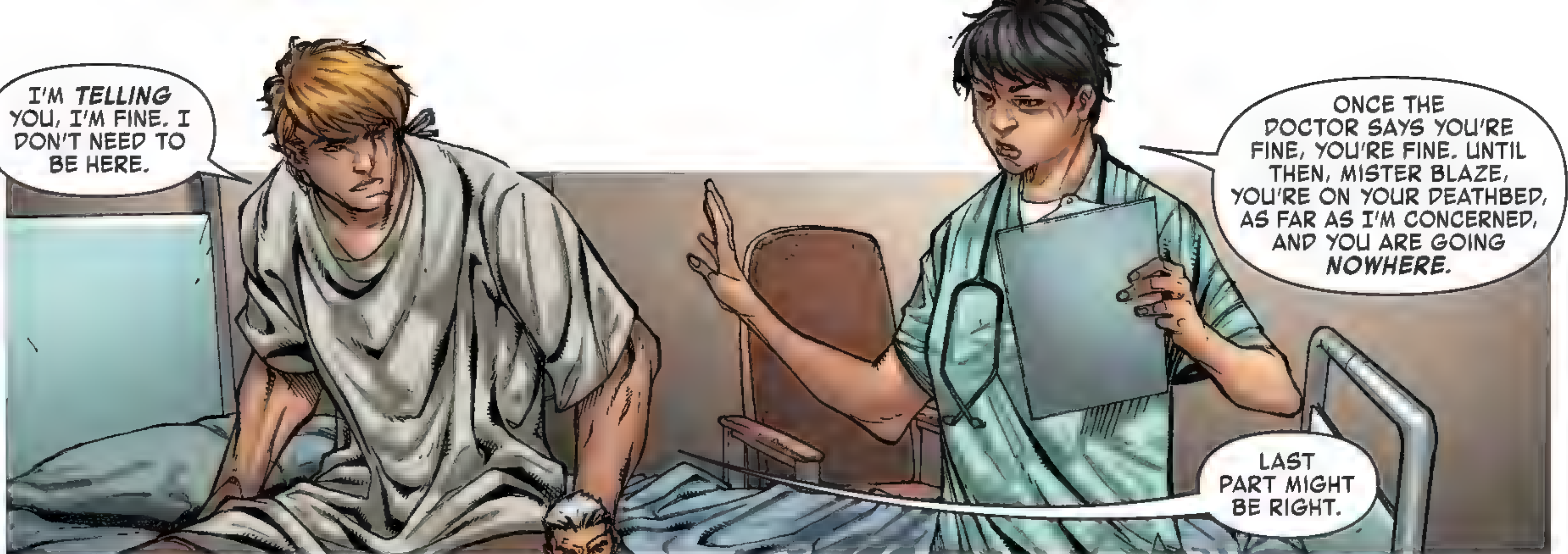
MR.
BLAZE?

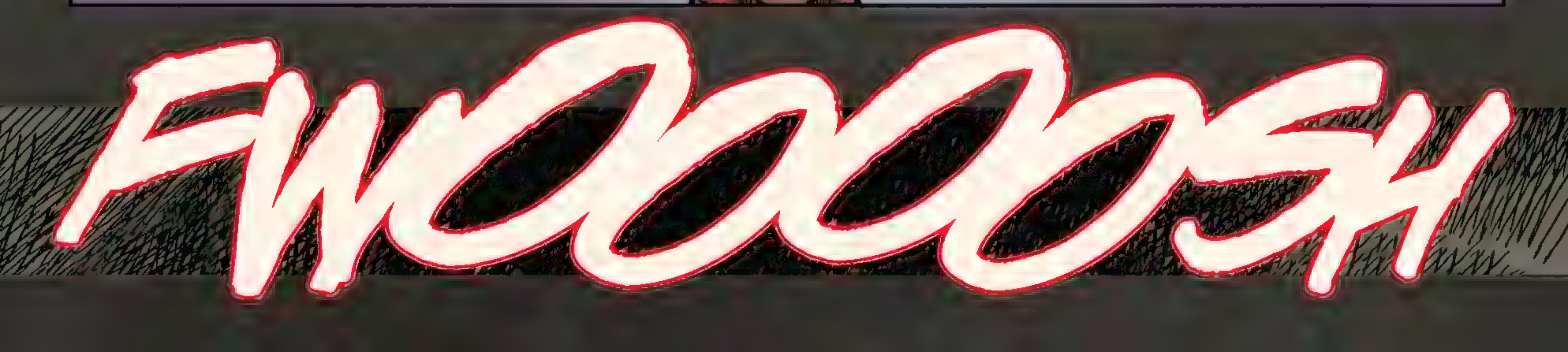
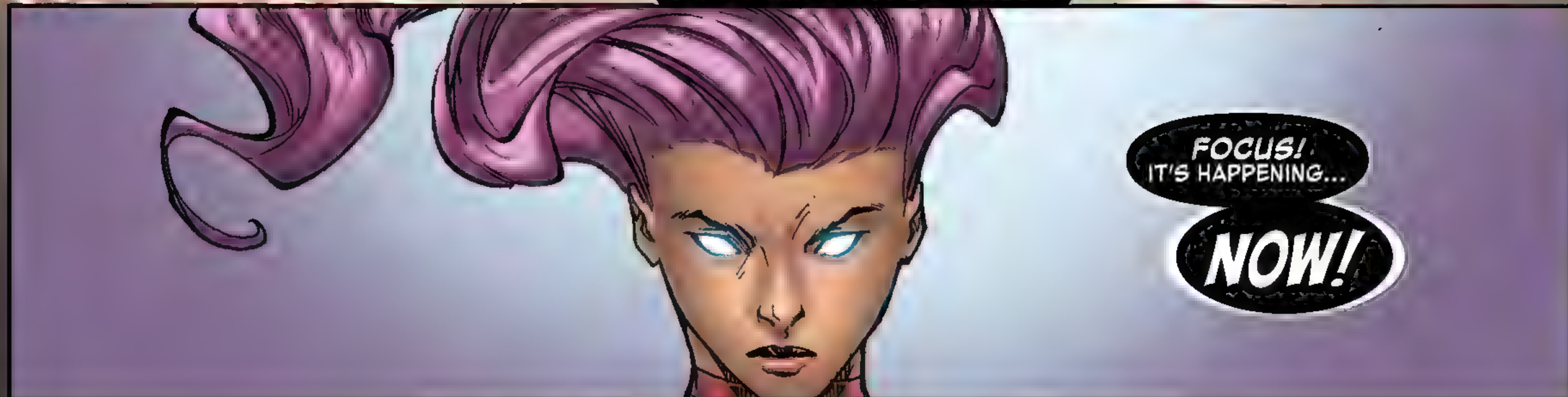
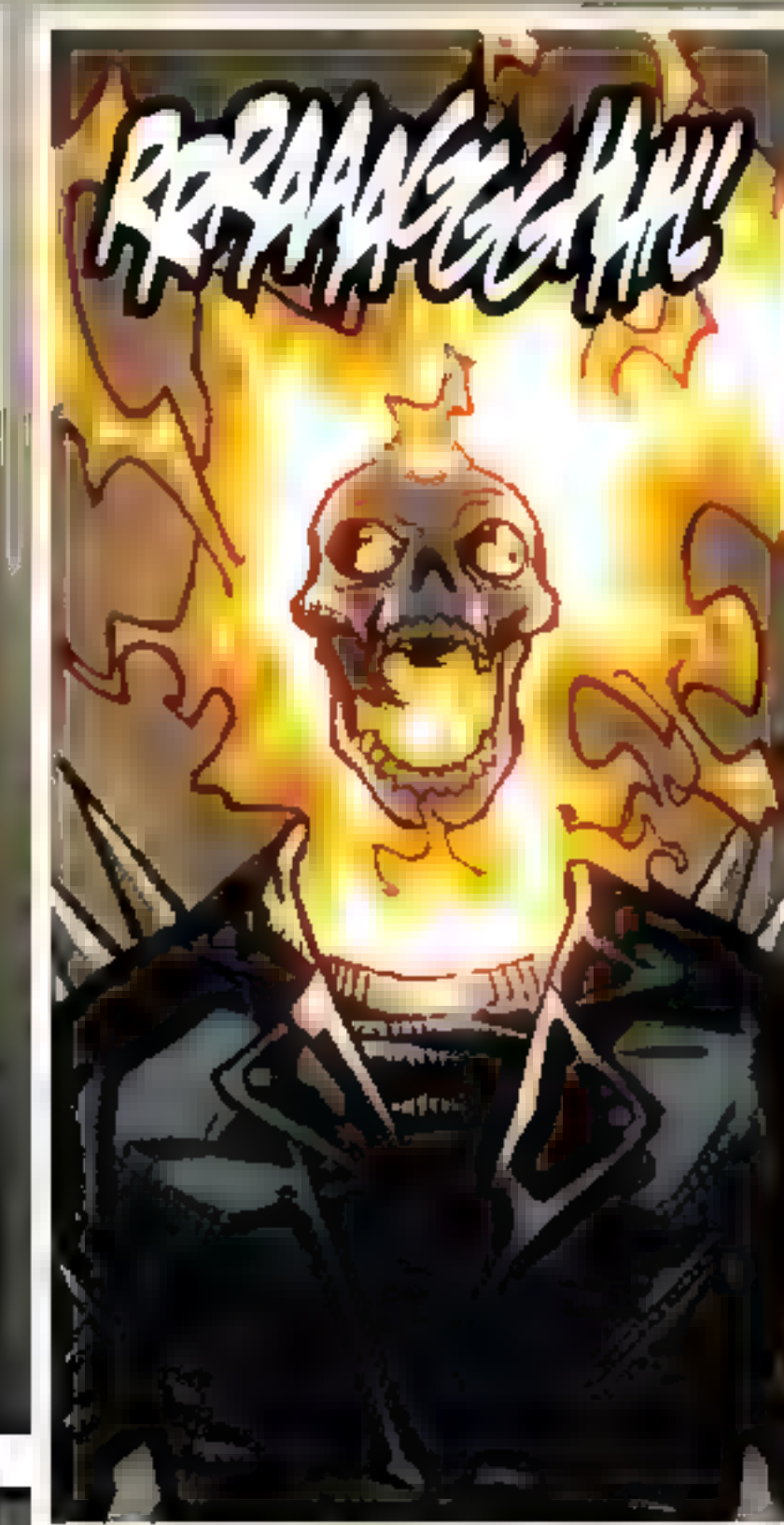
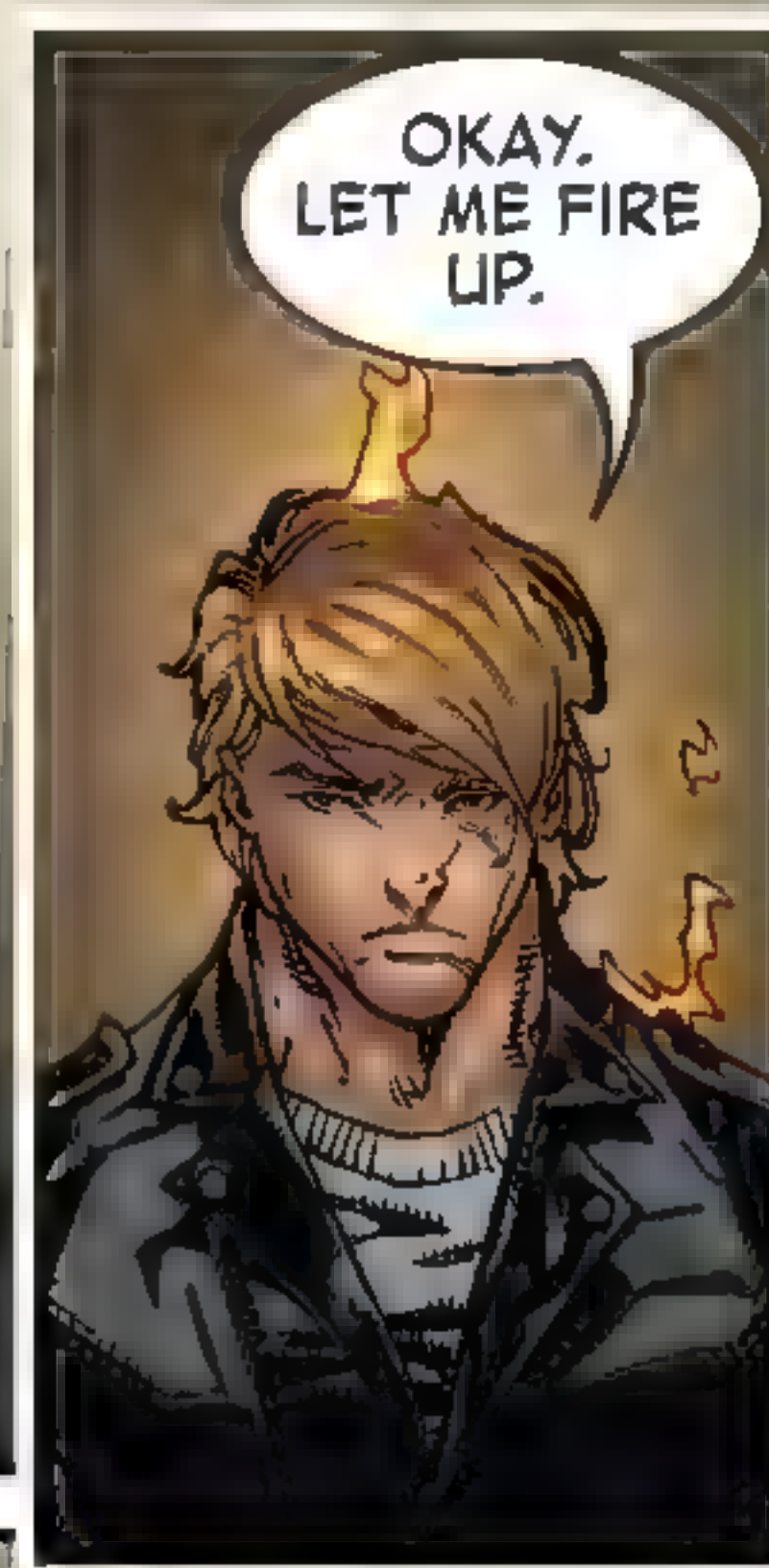














OOPS.

CONTINUED.

THUNDERBOLTS



ALL-NEW
MARVEL
NOW!

CHARLES SOULE
CARLO BARBERI
ISRAEL SILVA

021

HELL.

THE BONESPIRE.

IS THIS THE ONLY WAY OUT, BLAZE?

WE NEED TO FIND A PERSONAL HELL. LAST I REMEMBER, THERE SHOULD BE SOME UP HERE.

SHOULD BE?

THINGS CHANGE IN HELL ALL THE TIME, THOMPSON. THEY'RE ALWAYS SHIFTING STUFF AROUND AS NEW SOULS SHOW UP.

AND WHEN THEY LEAVE, YEAH? ONCE THEY REDEEM THEIR SINS THROUGH DIABOLICAL SUFFERING? I MEAN, THAT'S THE DEAL, RIGHT?

THAT'S A PR SPIN. NO ONE LEAVES.

THERE'S A PLACE DOWN HERE-- THE CUBICLE HELLS. DAY STARTS AT NINE SHARP, AND NEVER ENDS.

IT'S GOT SIGNS POSTED ALL OVER THE PLACE: "REDEMPTION IS AT THE DISCRETION OF MANAGEMENT."

MANAGEMENT IS DEMONS.

THE LAST THING DEMONS CARE ABOUT IS REDEEMING SOULS.

GETTING INTO HELL IS EASY, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. BUT GETTING OUT?



GETTING OUT'S A BITCH.

WHY A PERSONAL HELL?

THE DEMONS HAVE TO USE A LOT OF A PERSON'S PSYCHE TO MAKE A PERSONAL HELL. THEY TEND TO BE METAPHYSICALLY CLOSER TO THE WORLD THE SOUL LEFT BEHIND. WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO BREAK THROUGH AND GET BACK UP TO EARTH.

AAH!

WSSH

FEELS WEIRD DOWN HERE, THOUGH.

DIFFERENT, SOMEHOW. NOT SURE WHY.

OOF.

THUD

YAH!

WHAM

LET'S GET ON WITH IT.

I DO NOT APPRECIATE BEING TOSSED.

I AM NOT A SACK OF POTATOES.

YOUR HEAD DOES LOOKS LIKE A TOMATO, THOUGH. I BET RULK JUST GOT CONFUSED.

I HATE YOU.

HUH. THERE USED TO BE TOMS OF PERSONAL HELLS HERE ONE AFTER THE OTHER, OOZING OUT OF THE GROUND LIKE TUMORS. NOW, I DON'T SEE...

WAIT.



THERE.



YEEEEUGH. IS THAT... HAIR?



FEAR OF CHEETAHS. I HAVE THAT, TOO.

NO. FEAR OF HAIR. THE PERSON IN THIS HELL MUST BE TERRIFIED OF HAIR. UTTERLY FASCINATING.

NO, DON'T TOUCH--



GAH!



YES. MUST BE CHAETOPHOBIA.

WHAT THE HELL IS THAT, STERNS?





--THAT!

STERNS!

FOR SOMEONE AS SMART AS YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE, YOU DO SOME OF THE DUMBEST #&%& I HAVE EVER SEEN.

I'M NATURALLY CURIOUS! LIFE IS ABOUT CONSTANT, CONTINUAL LEARNING!

WHAT YOU ARE IS A CONSTANT, CONTINUAL LIABILITY. I'M SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING JUST LEAVING YOU DOWN HERE. HELL SEEMS ABOUT THE BEST PLACE FOR--



WHA--

THWIP

RRK!

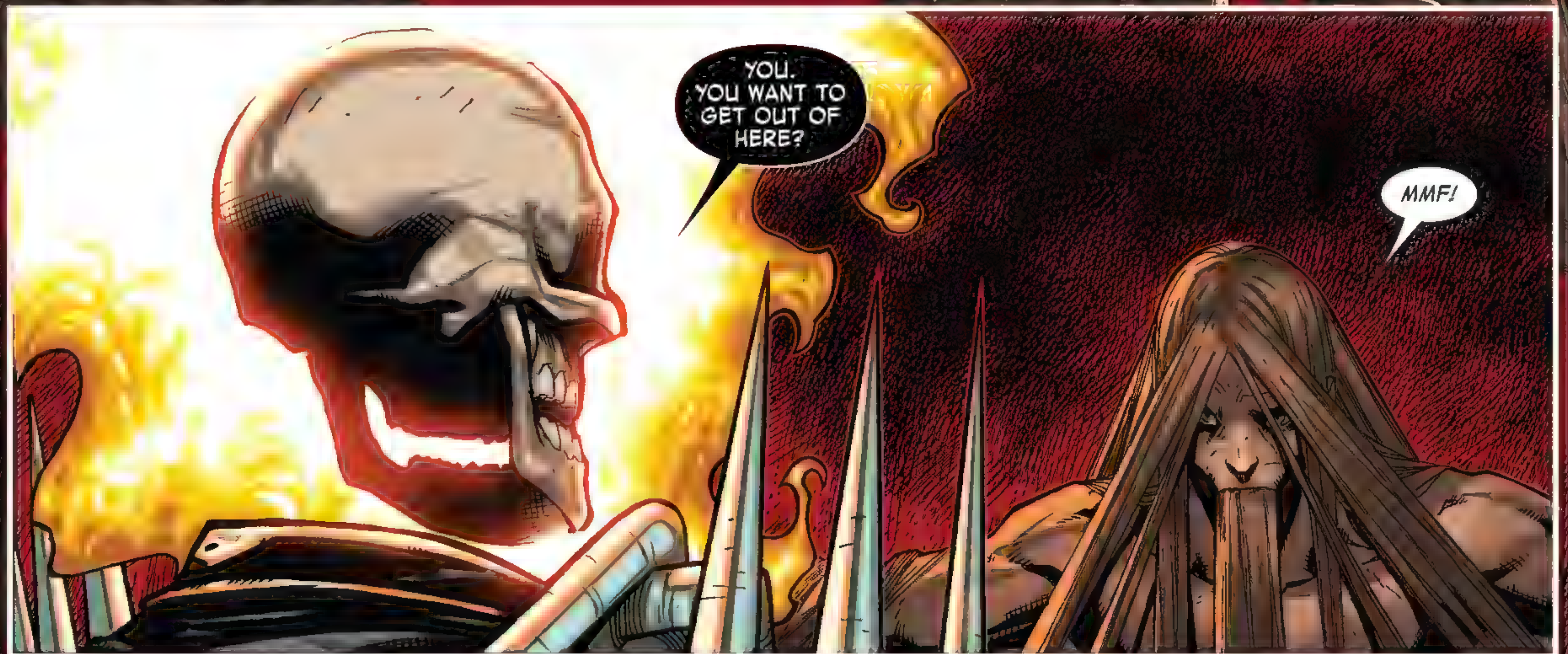
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?

I THINK...IS THAT ROSS'S MUSTACHE?



MY KINGDOM FOR A BOTTLE OF NAIR!

YOU HELP ROSS. I HAVE TO TALK TO THIS GUY.



YOU. YOU WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE?

MMF!



TYPICAL.

ALL RIGHT, HOLD ON.



Swoosh



HOLD STILL, ROSS!

EWWW. STINKS. SOMEONE SET A HIPPIE ON FIRE?

MMF!



OH,
THANK YOU,
THANK YOU.

DO YOU WANT
TO GET OUT? WE
CAN ALL GET OUT,
BUT YOU HAVE
TO HELP ME.

DO
YOU HAVE
A RAZOR?
ANYTHING
SHARP?

PLEASE. I
CAN FEEL IT
GROWING BACK.
A KNIFE? ANYTHING.
HAVE TO STAY NICE
AND SMOOTH. NICE
AND CLEAN.

DAMMIT.



YES, THIS
WILL DO. THIS
WILL DO.

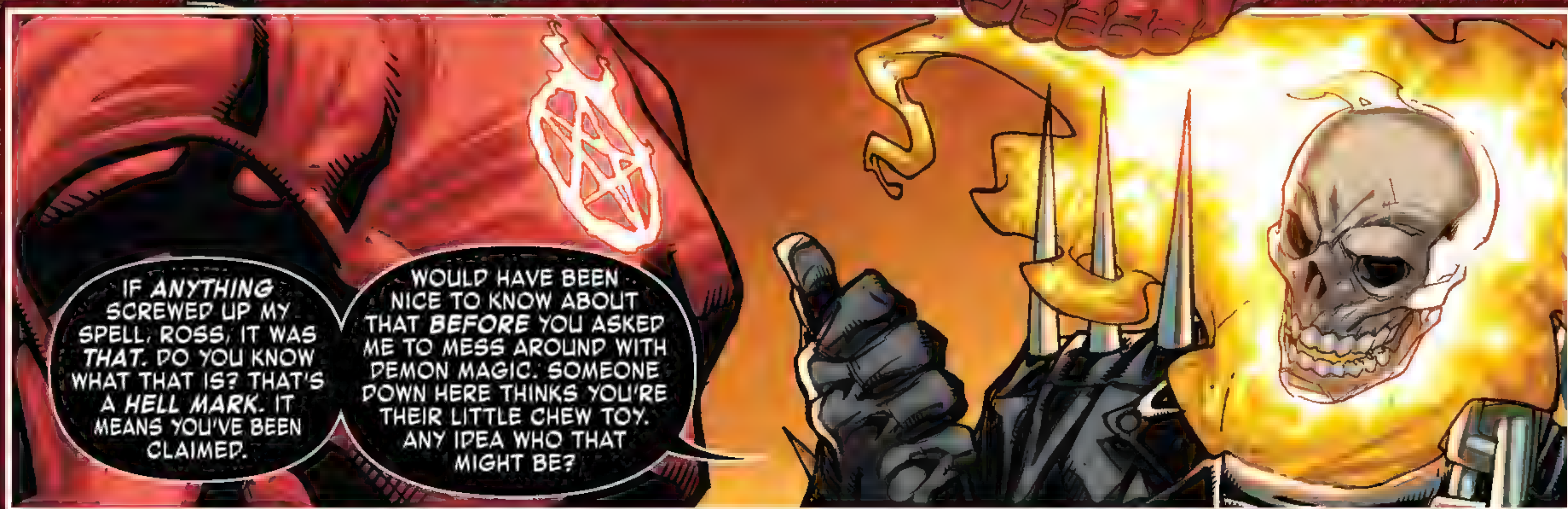
THIS
GUY'S TOO
FAR GONE.

WE HAVE TO
FIND ANOTHER
ONE.

YOU
FOUGHT WELL
AND BRAVELY,
MUSTACHE.

I'M GOING TO
TRY TO FORGET
THIS EVER
HAPPENED.

WHAT? DO
YOU ACTUALLY
HAVE ANY IDEA
WHAT YOU'RE
DOING?





HELLO,
BOYS.

UH-OH.

HMPH.

MEPHISTO.
YOU KNOW HOW
I WAS TALKING
ABOUT HELL'S
MANAGEMENT
TEAM?

WHO IS
THAT?

"HE'S THE
CEO."

10 **THE CRUCIBLE.**
THUNDERBOLTS HQ.



HOW LONG SHOULD WE WAIT?

I'M GIVING THEM FORTY-EIGHT HOURS. AFTER THAT, I'M GONE. I DON'T HAVE TIME TO SIT AROUND WHILE ROSS AND THE OTHERS GO ON MAGICAL ADVENTURES.

SO, YOU'RE JUST GOING TO... SIT HERE AND CLEAN YOUR GUNS?

GUNS CAN NEVER BE TOO CLEAN, ELEKTRA. YOU HAVE A BETTER IDEA?

MAYBE.



NOT NOW.

FINE, CASTLE. BUT I'M NOT GOING TO WASTE TWO DAYS WHEN I COULD BE EARNING.

FINE.

SEE YOU WHEN I SEE YOU.

BACK.

JUST TALKED TO MY GUY. HE'S GOT A JOB FOR ME. NOT FAR. YOU WANT TO COME?

...

ALL RIGHT.





LISTEN, MEPHISTO--THIS IS ALL A MISUNDERSTANDING. WE'RE JUST PASSING THROUGH. HONESTLY.

I HAVE LITTLE USE FOR HONESTY, SPIRIT. YOU MAY GO, IF YOU CHOOSE. IT IS ONE OF YOUR COLLEAGUES I REQUIRE.



HIM.
EXCUSE ME?



YOU ARE MARKED. YOU MUST SERVE ME WHEN I CALL.
I DON'T THINK SO.
YOU HAVE NO CHOICE IN THE MATTER.
MAKE ME.



DAMN YOU.
MAYBE, BUT NOT BY YOU.



I UNDERSTAND NOW.
OF COURSE. THE REASON
HELL FEELS DIFFERENT TO ME--
THE REASON HE CAN'T ENFORCE
THAT HELL MARK--HE *ISN'T*
RUNNING THINGS DOWN
HERE ANYMORE.

HE'S LOST
THE THRONE.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT,
MEPHISTO?

A MOMENTARY
INCONVENIENCE.
MEPHISTO IS NEVER
DEFEATED FOR
LONG.



WHO'S
GOT IT?

A PRETENDER.
HE DOES NOT EVEN
HOLD *DEMON BLOOD*.
AND WHAT IS WORSE, HE
IS *RELEASING* SOULS.
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN
RECORDED MEMORY,
HE IS SETTLING
ACCOUNTS.

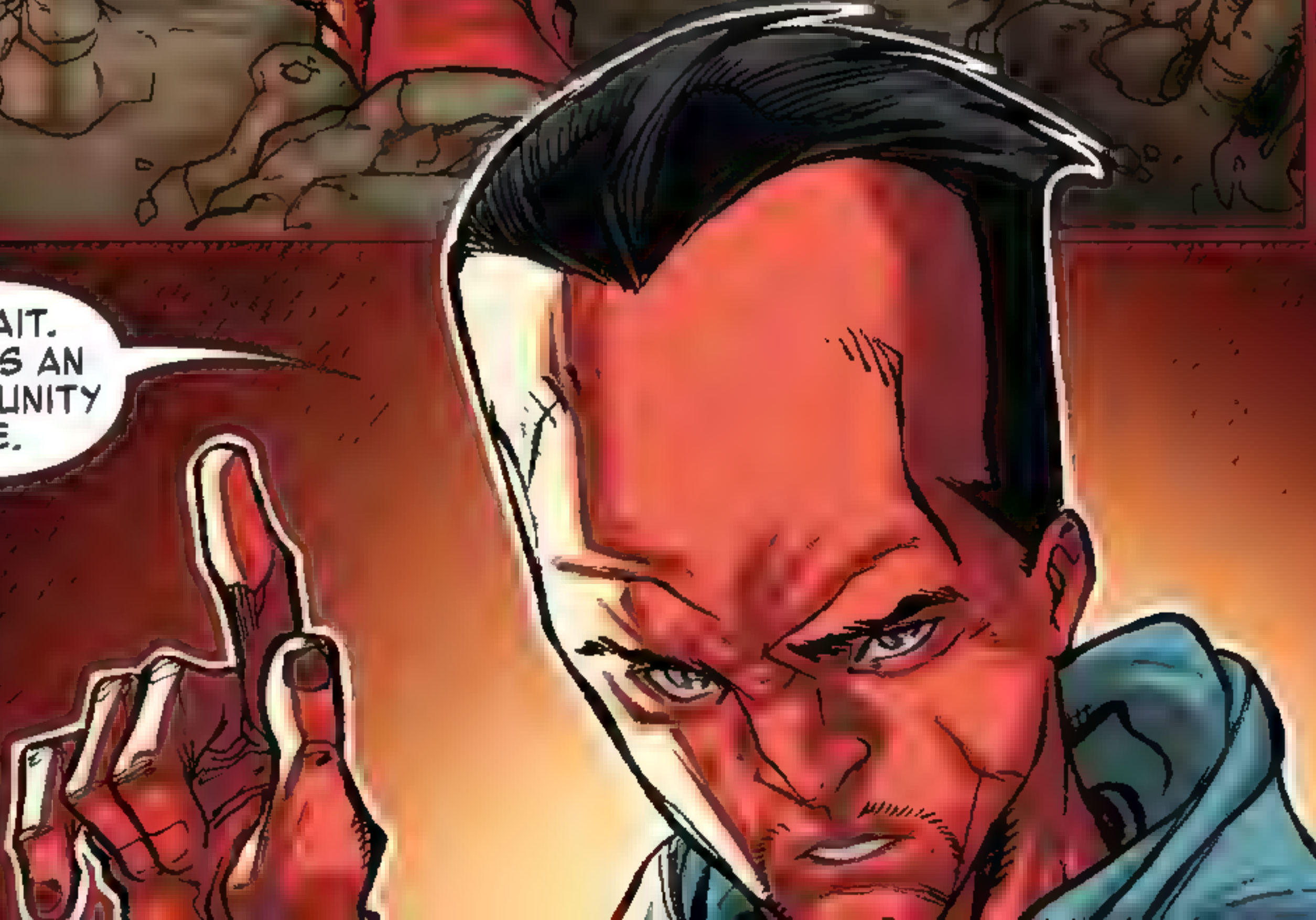
HE IS HELL'S
DESTRUCTION.



NONE OF US
CARE. COME ON.
LET'S FIND ANOTHER
WAY OUT OF HERE. WE
STILL HAVE TO DEAL
WITH THE MERCY
PROBLEM.

THAT'D BE A
GOOD BAND
NAME. I'M GOING
TO REMEMBER THAT.
*THE MERCY
PROBLEM.*

NO. WAIT.
THERE IS AN
OPPORTUNITY
HERE.





WE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DEAL.

I...SEE. WHAT ARE YOUR TERMS?

WAIT A MINUTE. THIS IS THE LAST GUY YOU WANT TO DEAL WITH.



WE HAVE AN ENEMY. WE ATTEMPTED TO SEND HER HERE TO DISPOSE OF HER, BUT THE FLAMING MAN OVER THERE FAILED MISERABLY, AND NOW WE ARE HERE INSTEAD.

YOU KNOW WHAT? FINE. MAKE YOUR DEAL. SEE HOW IT PLAYS OUT, IDIOT.

IF YOU WERE RESTORED TO YOUR POSITION AS LORD OF HELL, COULD YOU BRING HER HERE, AND SEND US BACK TO EARTH?

WITH THE BAREST OF EFFORT.



EXCELLENT. THEN HERE IS WHAT WE PROPOSE--WE WILL DESTROY THE CURRENT KING OF HELL AND PUT YOU BACK ON YOUR THRONE, AND IN RETURN YOU WILL DO AS I JUST DESCRIBED.

UNLESS YOU OBJECT, THADDEUS?

I'LL DO WHAT IT TAKES TO SHUT MERCY DOWN. THIS WOULDN'T BE MY FIRST DEAL WITH A MONSTER, AND IT WON'T BE MY LAST.

IT IS AGREED, THEN. SHALL WE SHAKE ON IT?

OHhhh NO. FOR THIS, I SHALL REQUIRE A WRITTEN CONTRACT, PROPERLY NOTARIZED AND WITNESSED, MIND YOU.



AN ACTUAL DEAL WITH THE DEVIL. CHALLENGES SUCH AS THIS DO NOT COME ALONG EVERY DAY.

WE HAVE ONLY BEGUN TO NEGOTIATE.

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT I LIKE YOU.



I AM NOT SURPRISED.

LET US BEGIN.

KRRACK



CAN YOU
TURN YOUR
HEAD OFF?

NOT DOWN
HERE.

THEN HOW
DO YOU BRUSH
YOUR TEETH?

I DON'T.

THAT'S
NASTY, BRO.



OH!

WHAT?

I JUST
THOUGHT OF
SOMETHING. I'VE
GOTTA GET IN ON
THAT DEAL THEY'RE
DOING.



WHAT IS
IT WITH THAT
GUY?

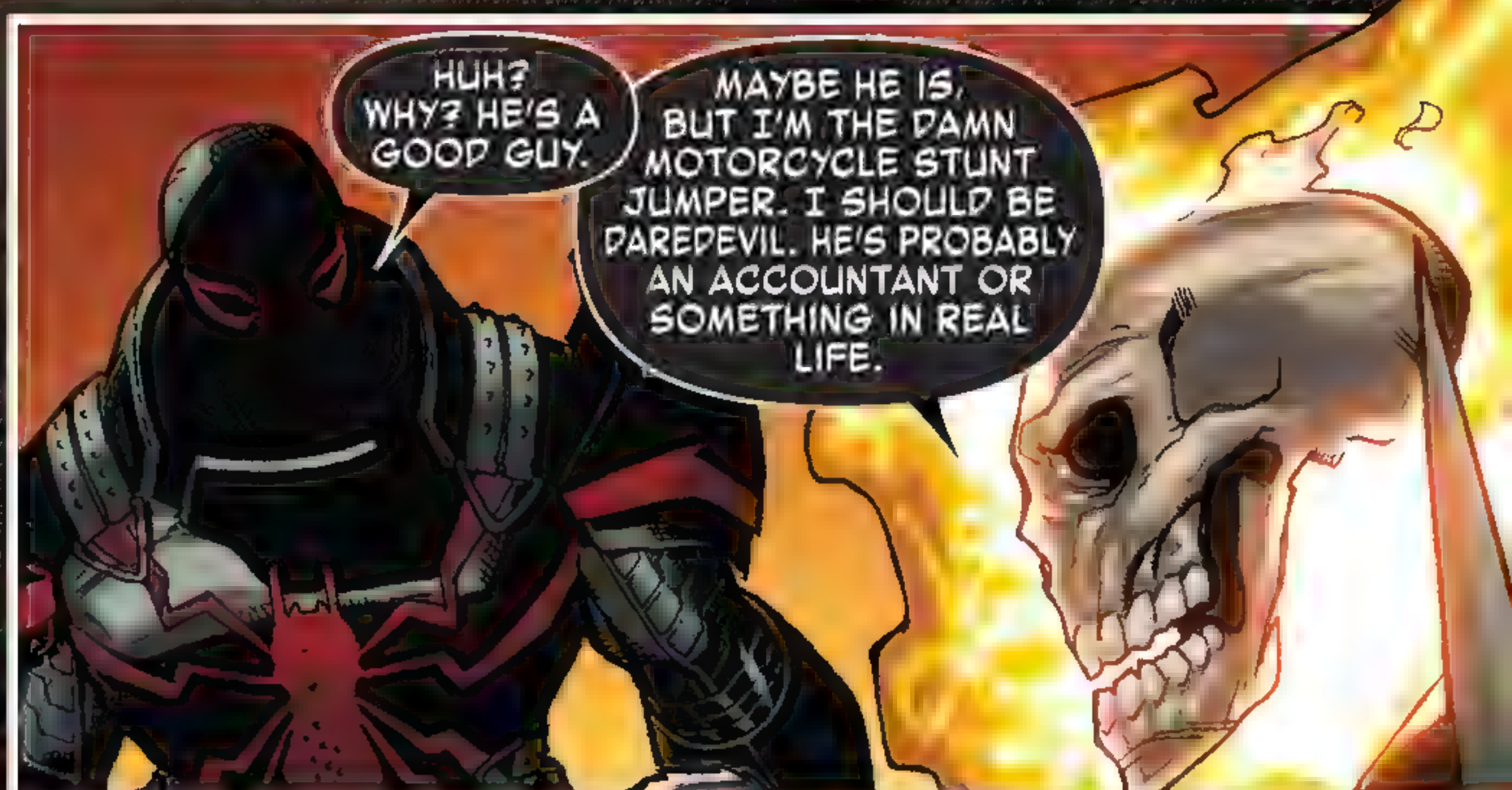
NO IDEA. HE'S
NUTS, BUT HE'S GOOD
AT WHAT HE DOES. YOU
DON'T THINK HE'S GOING
TO COME THROUGH, AND
THEN SOMEHOW HE
DOES. SOMETIMES.

AND THE
RED THING? YOU
GUYS ARE ALL IN
RED.

THIS IS SORT
OF ROSS' THING,
AND HE'S THE RED
HULK, SO...

ALL WE NEED
TO DO NOW IS
RECRUIT PAREDEVIL.
I GUESS.

I HATE
THAT DUDE.



HUH?
WHY? HE'S A
GOOD GUY.

MAYBE HE IS,
BUT I'M THE DAMN
MOTORCYCLE STUNT
JUMPER. I SHOULD BE
PAREDEVIL. HE'S PROBABLY
AN ACCOUNTANT OR
SOMETHING IN REAL
LIFE.



SUBCLAUSE
17(G)(II)(XX) NEEDS TO
ADD REASONABLENESS
LANGUAGE.

DONE, BUT
THEN I NEED
A BEST EFFORTS
CLAUSE IN
18(C).

CONTEXTUAL
BEST EFFORTS,
NO MORE.

ARE YOU SCREWING
ME HERE, STERNS?
BECAUSE I WILL LITERALLY
EAT YOU IF YOU ARE
SCREWING ME.

CAN I GET
IN ON THIS? I
WANT TO GET
IN ON THIS.



WHO'S THE TARGET?

MID-LEVEL CRIMINAL BOSS. WENT INTO HIDING AFTER HE STOLE ANOTHER CRIMINAL'S MONEY, AND NOW THAT GUY'S PUT OUT A CONTRACT.

THE USUAL.



I'LL SPLIT THE FEE WITH YOU.

NO.

NO? IT'S A LOT OF MONEY.



THAT'S... NOT WHY I DO IT.



MONEY'S AS GOOD A REASON AS ANY.

MAYBE FOR YOU.

I CAN INTRODUCE YOU AROUND. IF YOU EVER WANTED TO TRY IT.

NO.



WE'RE HERE.



THREE VISIBLE, ALMOST CERTAINLY MORE INSIDE. MY THINKING IS YOU SNIPE FROM OUT HERE, WHILE I TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE DISTRACTION, SLIP INSIDE AND TAKE OUT THE TARGET.

YOU CAN HELP MOP UP INSIDE ONCE YOU TAKE DOWN WHOEVER MAKES IT OUT OF THE HOUSE.

HOW DO YOU KNOW?



WHAT?

HOW DO YOU KNOW? THAT THIS IS WHAT YOUR GUY TOLD YOU IT WAS? CRIMINALS KILLING CRIMINALS--I'M FINE WITH THAT.

BUT WHAT IF THIS IS WITNESS PROTECTION? WHAT IF THOSE GUARDS ARE FBI?



I KNOW BECAUSE I TRUST MY GUY. HE KNOWS MY LIMITS, AND HE KNOWS THAT IF I EVER FIND OUT HE LIED TO ME THAT I'M GOING AFTER HIM NEXT.

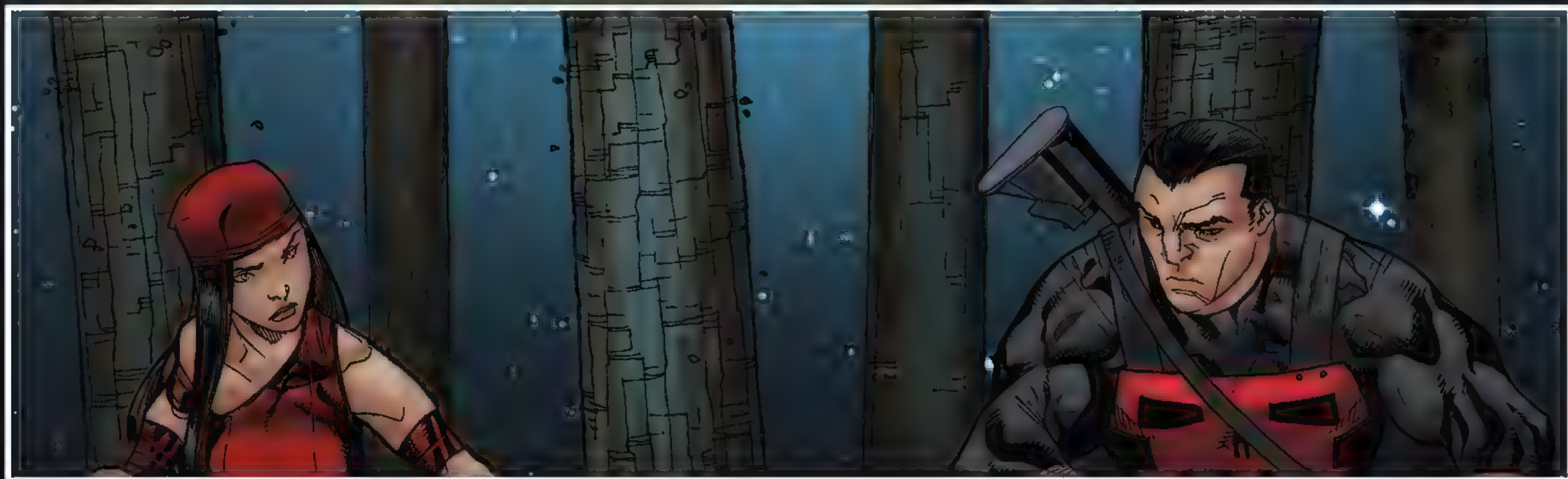
SO, I TRUST MY GUY, AND YOU TRUST ME. THAT'S HOW IT WORKS. BUT MAYBE YOU DON'T KNOW HOW THAT WORKS.

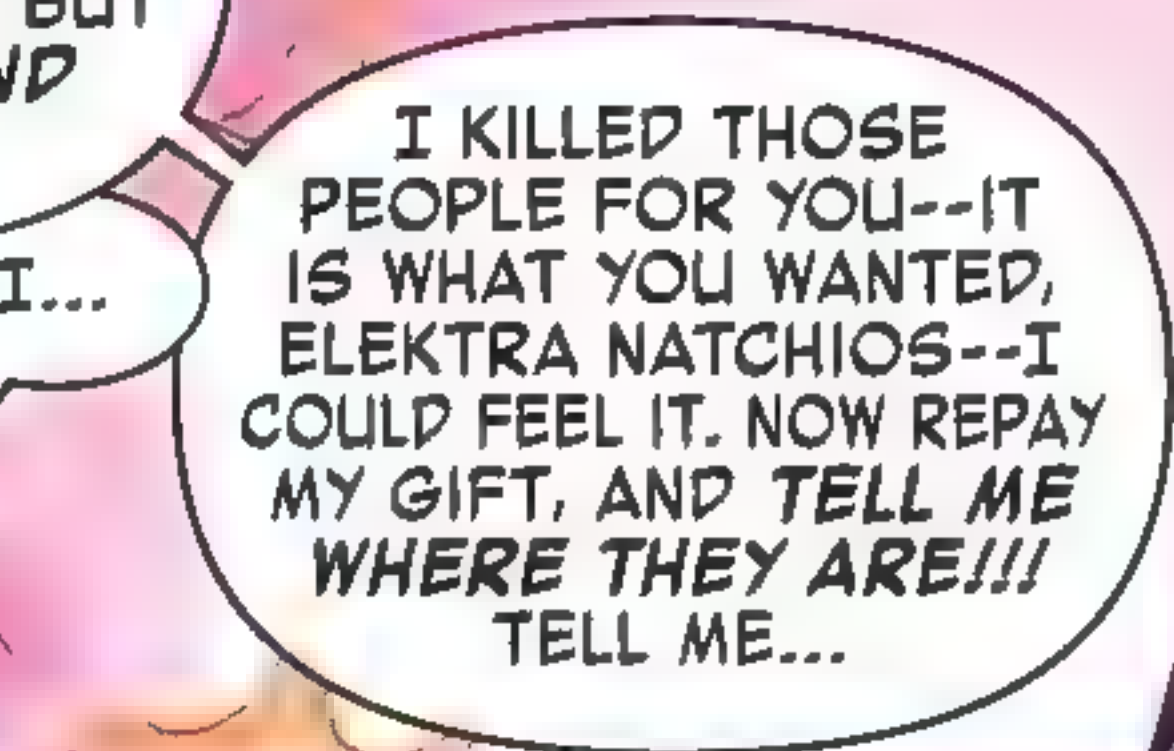
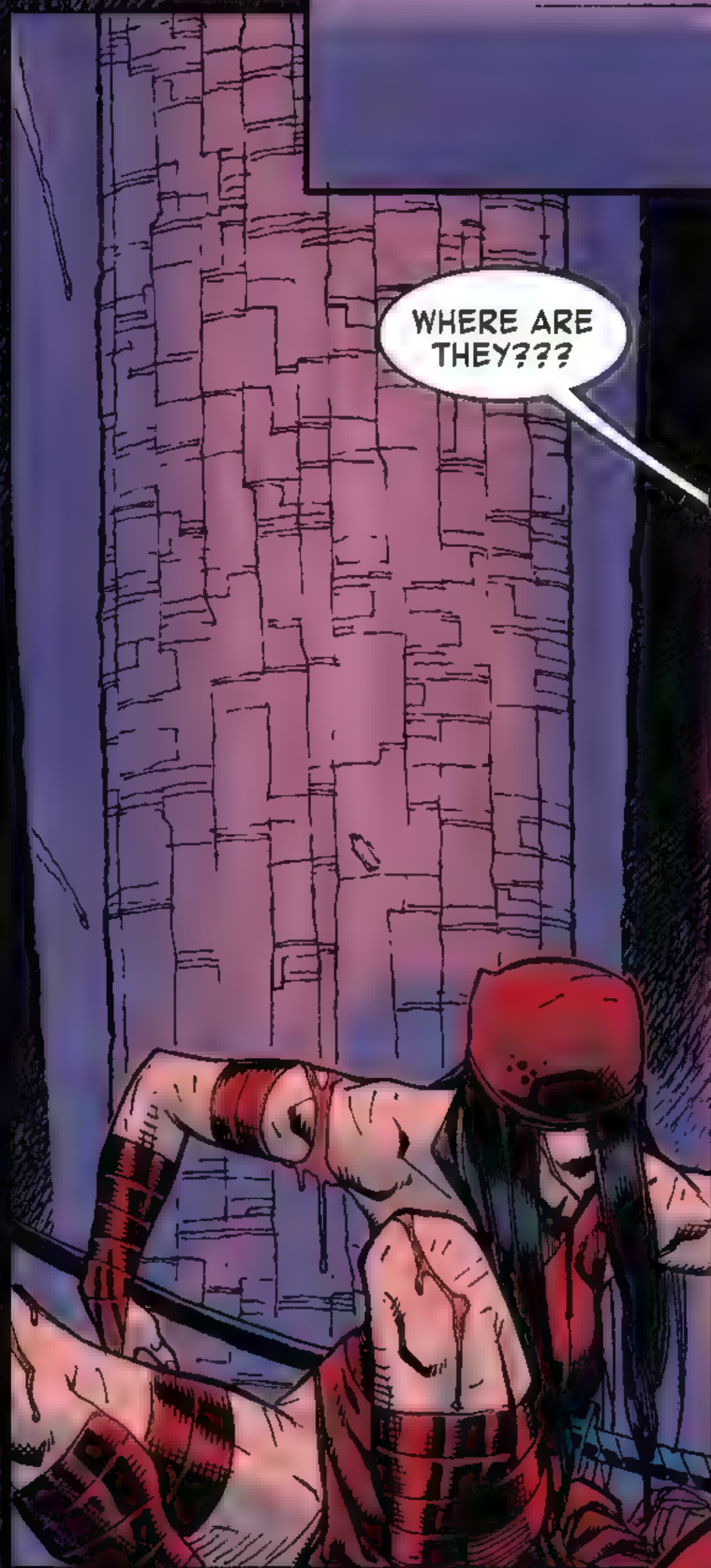
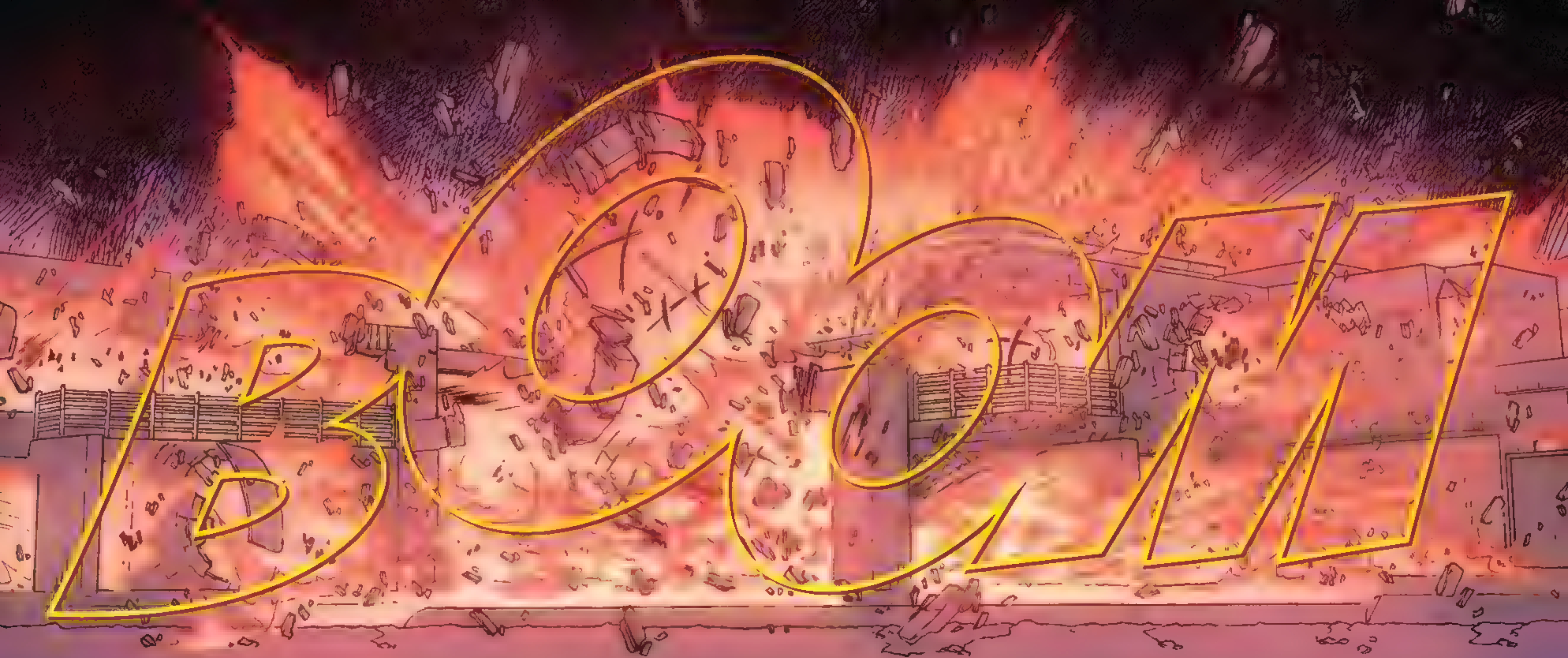
DO YOU TRUST ANYONE, CASTLE?



EVERYONE I TRUST ENDS UP DEAD, OR THEY BETRAY ME AND THEN THEY END UP DEAD.

DO YOU WANT ME TO TRUST YOU, ELEKTRA?







SO I GOT INTO THE MOVIES BECAUSE I WAS SICK OF BEING AROUND SO MUCH EVIL ALL THE TIME. DEVILS, DEMONS, MONSTERS-- IT TAKES ITS TOLL.

A FEW FAKE STORIES, WHERE THE GOOD GUYS WIN-- SOUNDED PRETTY GOOD TO ME.

WHAT HAPPENED?

WELL, THE MOVIES SUCKED. THAT WAS PROBABLY A LOT OF IT. BUT I COULD HAVE STRETCHED IT OUT FOR A WHILE, MAYBE.

SO? WHY DIDN'T YOU?



THE SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE GOT BORED. IT LOOKED INTO ONE OF THE PRODUCERS, SAW THAT HE'D KILLED A DUDE ON A HIT AND RUN A FEW YEARS BACK AND CHARBROILED HIM.

THAT WAS IT FOR JOHNNY BLAZE IN TINSELTOWN.

HUH. YEAH, I CAN SEE HOW THAT WOULD WORK.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH YOU GUYS, ANYWAY? YOU A TEAM? YOU SEEM TO HATE EACH OTHER.



SORT OF. LIKE A TEAM OF CONVENIENCE. ROSS HAS US HELP HIM CLEAN UP SOME OF HIS MESSSES, AND IN RETURN THE TEAM DOES ONE MISSION FOR EACH MEMBER, SOMETHING TOO BIG FOR US TO DO ALONE. WE PICK NAMES OUT OF A HAT.

FOR REAL?
YEAH. IT WORKS. SORT OF.

HUH. INTERESTING.



THERE. EXCELLENT. SIGNED BY GENERAL ROSS ON BEHALF OF THE TEAM, INCLUDING MR. WADE'S PROVISIONS AND WITNESSED BY MR. STERNS HERE. NOW, I CAN HAVE A NOTARY HERE IN A MOMENT, I'M SURE, AND THEN WE'RE OFF.

I'M A NOTARY.



FAIR ENOUGH, THEN.





"...ISN'T THAT
GUIDO?"

CONTINUED.

THUNDERBOLTS



ALL-NEW
MARVEL
NOW!

AR

SOULE
BARBERI
SILVA

022

HELL.
THE THRONE ROOM.

YOU
DIDN'T TELL US
STRONG GUY
IS RUNNING
HELL!

YOU DIDN'T
ASK. YOU WOULDN'T
BELIEVE THE QUESTIONS
PEOPLE FAIL TO ASK
WHEN THEY MAKE
DEALS WITH ME.

BUT...GUIDO'S
A GOOD GUY.
WHAT'S HE DOING
DOWN HERE?

THERE'S NO
SUCH THING AS
A GOOD GUY, MR.
WILSON. SOME
PEOPLE ARE
JUST BETTER
ACTORS.

SO HOW IS
THIS SUPPOSED
TO WORK? HOW
DO WE GET YOU
BACK ON THAT
THRONE?

IT'S SIMPLE,
REALLY--

NOTHING'S SIMPLE
WHEN YOU EXPLAIN
IT, MEPHISTO.
LET ME.

HULK, YOU'VE GOT THAT HELL MARK ON YOUR
CHEST, WHICH MEANS YOU CAN BE MEPHISTO'S
CHAMPION. I CAN DO IT TOO. ONE OF US
JUST NEEDS TO GET UP THERE, CHALLENGE
STRONG GUY, BEAT HIM, AND THEN
THIS MONSTER'S BACK
IN CHARGE.

THAT DOES
SOUND SIMPLE,
ACTUALLY.

IT'S
NOT. THERE'S
MORE.

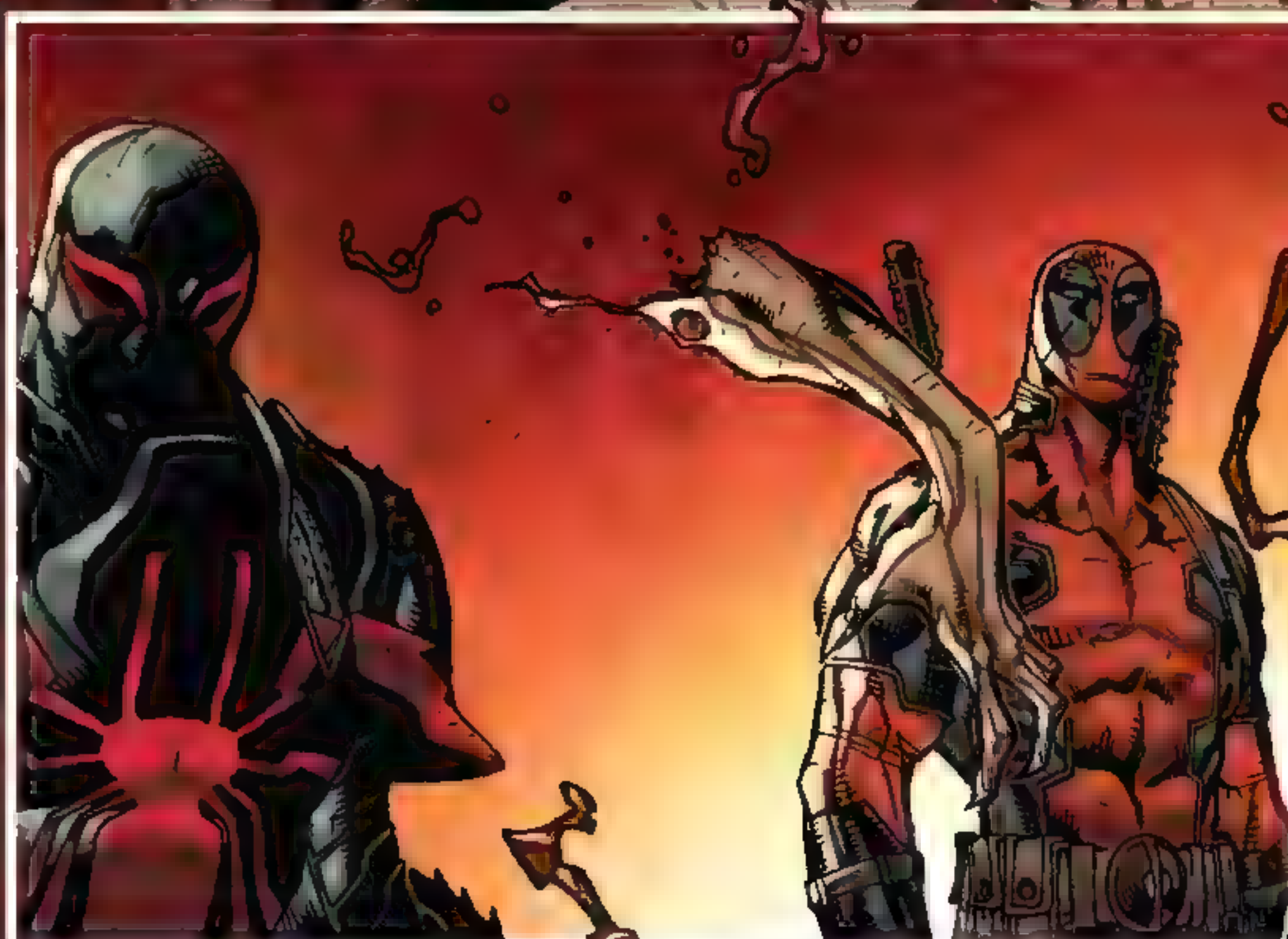


"YOU DON'T GET TO CHALLENGE THE KING UNLESS YOU PROVE YOURSELF WORTHY."

"WHICH WE DO HOW, EXACTLY?"

"FIRST, YOU HAVE TO GET PAST HIS COURT."

GREAT.



WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? GET TO IT!

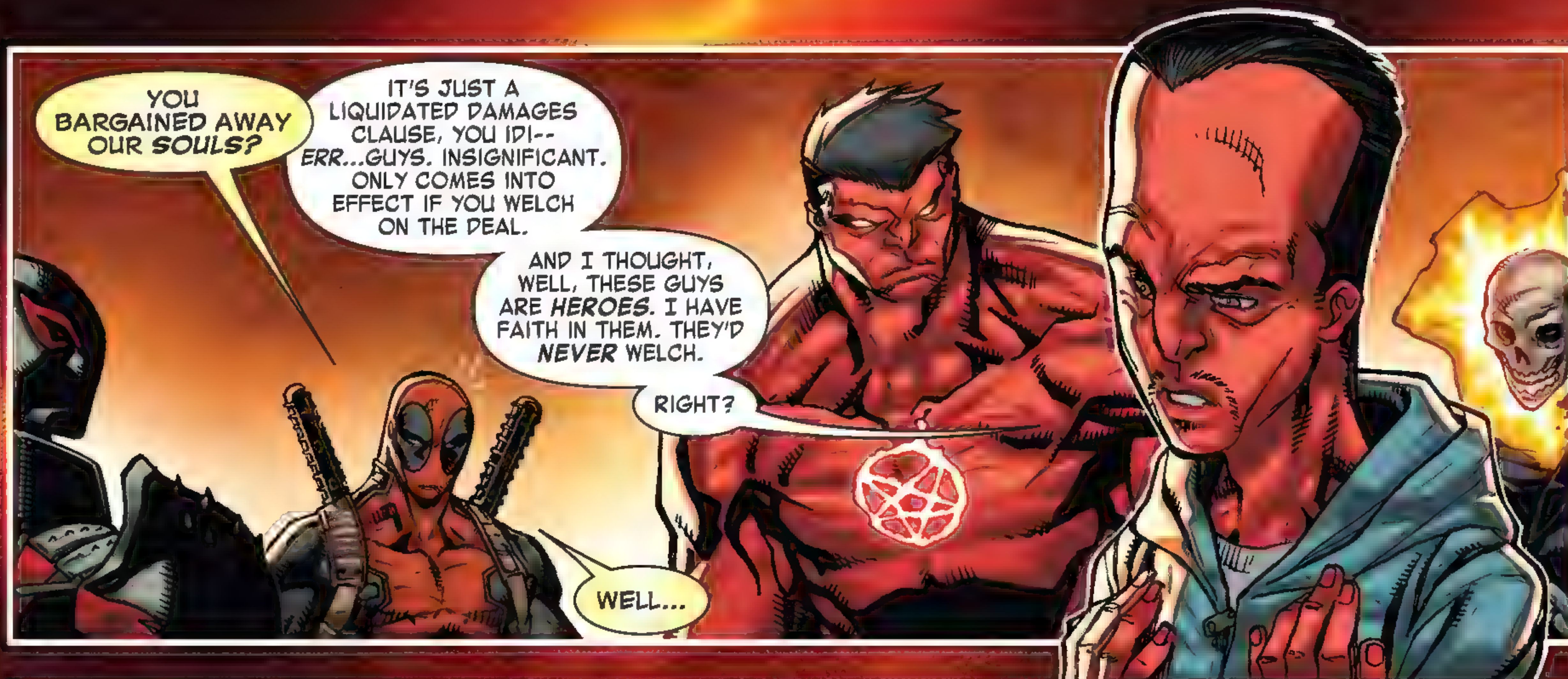
YEAH, WELL. I'M RETHINKING THIS A BIT. I'M NOT SURE FIGHTING A BUNCH OF DEMONS IN ORDER TO KILL GUIDO CAROSELLA IS EXACTLY WHAT WE SIGNED UP FOR.

ON THE CONTRARY, GENERAL...

...THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU SIGNED UP FOR. READ THE AGREEMENT, SO ABLY NEGOTIATED BY MR. STERNS.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO COMPLY, BUT THAT WOULD BE DEEMED A MATERIAL BREACH UNDER THE TERMS OF YOUR CONTRACT, WHICH WOULD MEAN I WOULD OWN ALL OF YOUR SOULS.

FRANKLY, I'M FINE EITHER WAY.



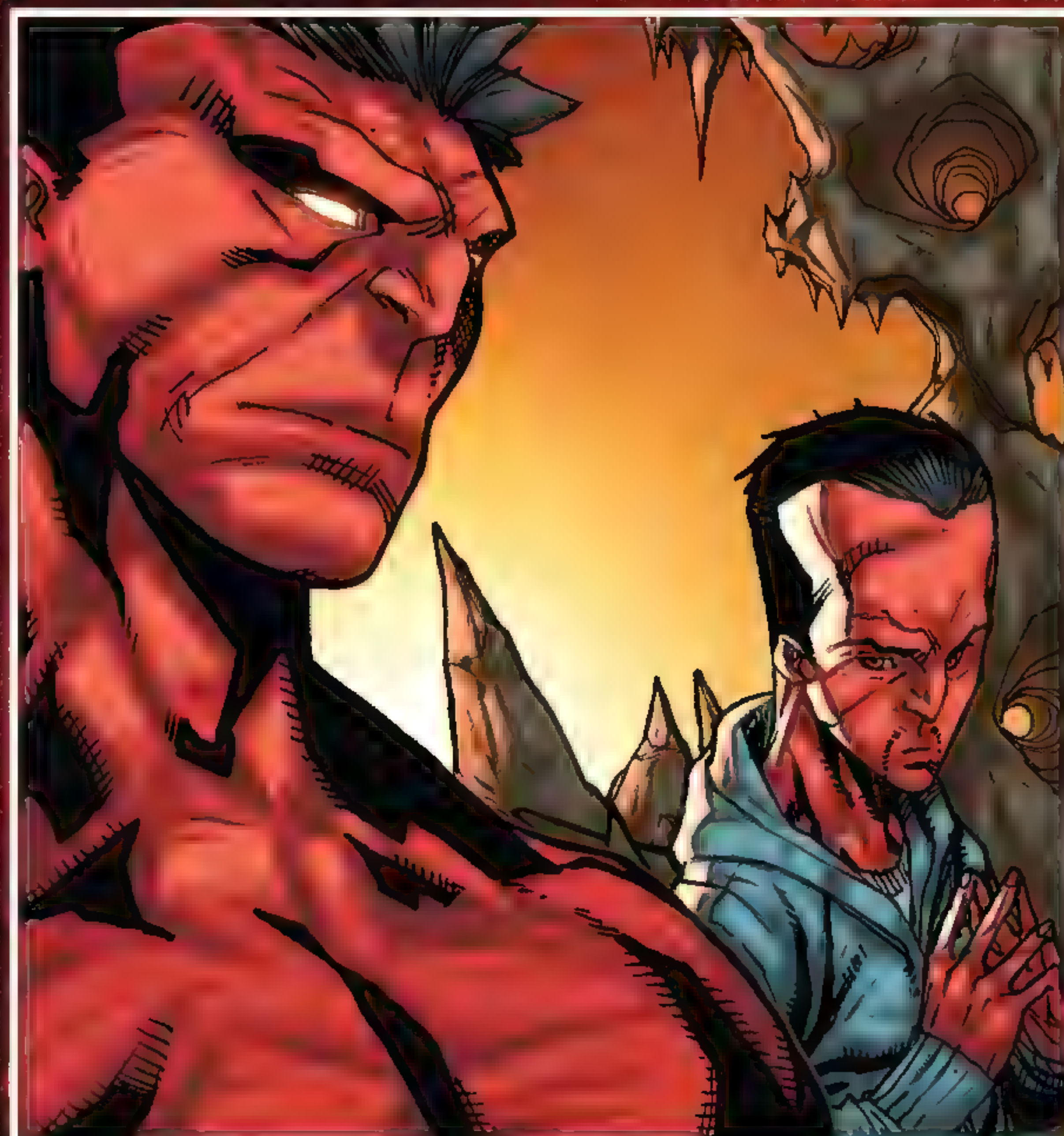
YOU
BARGAINED AWAY
OUR SOULS?

IT'S JUST A
LIQUIDATED DAMAGES
CLAUSE, YOU IDI--
ERR...GUYS. INSIGNIFICANT.
ONLY COMES INTO
EFFECT IF YOU WELCH
ON THE DEAL.

AND I THOUGHT,
WELL, THESE GUYS
ARE *HEROES*. I HAVE
FAITH IN THEM. THEY'D
NEVER WELCH.

RIGHT?

WELL...



RIGHT.

LET'S
GO.

DON'T
SUPPOSE YOU'RE
GOING TO HELP?

DO I LOOK
LIKE SOMEONE
WHO HELPS?

BEST OF
LUCK, GENERAL.
I, TOO, HAVE
FAITH IN YOU.





RRAAAGHH!



YOU OKAY
HERE FOR A FEW
MINUTES, VENOM?
DEADPOOL?

BETTER THAN
GOOD. WE'RE
HAVING THE TIME
OF OUR LIVES.

DO WHAT
YOU GOTTA DO.
I'M ROOTING FOR
MEPHISTO HERE.
WE GET THROUGH
THIS, HE OWES
ME.

ALL
RIGHT. HULK,
GET ON.

BEHIND
YOU?

JUST
DO IT.

ALL
RIGHT.
HOLD
ON.

RENNNNNN





WHERE ARE THEY? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH THADDEUS ROSS AND SAMUEL STERNS?

TELL ME NOW, ELEKTRA NATCHIOS, OR YOU WILL BURN!!!



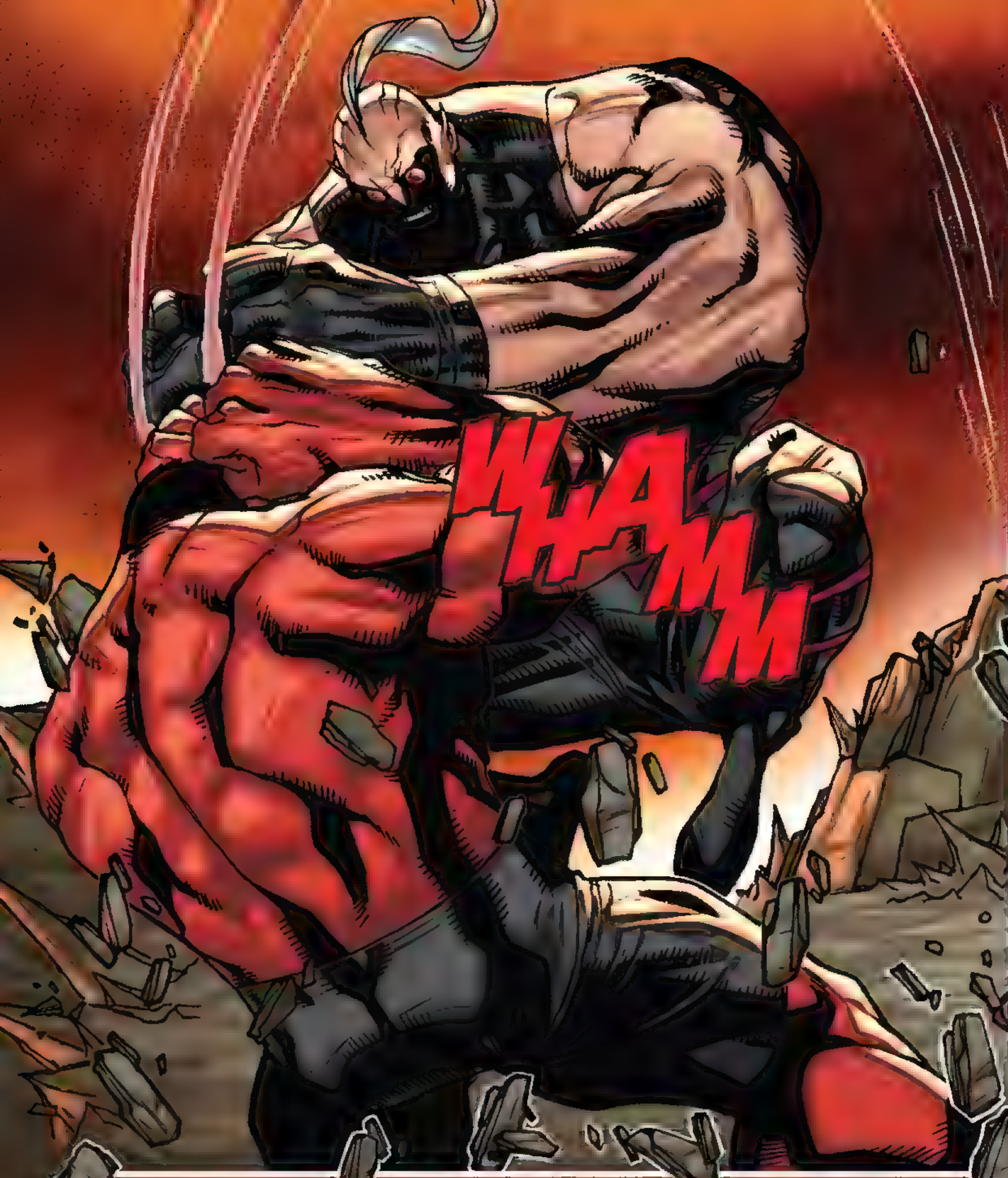
**BANG
BANGBANG
BANG**

HEY. MERCY. THAT'S YOUR NAME, RIGHT?

YOU KNOW WHAT THEY CALL ME? PUNISHER.

NEVER HAD MUCH USE FOR MERCY.





WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING DOWN HERE, GUIDO? YOU DON'T BELONG HERE.

I DO. I GAVE UP MY SOUL. THERE'S NO BETTER PLACE FOR ME.



WHY'D YOU GO AND DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

I DID IT TO SAVE SOMEONE I LOVED--AND IT BOUGHT ME ALL THIS.

ANYONE ELSE RUNNING THIS PLACE WOULD BE SO MUCH WORSE, ROSS. AT LEAST I'M REDEEMING SOULS. I'M LOST, BUT SOME OF THESE OTHERS MIGHT NOT BE.

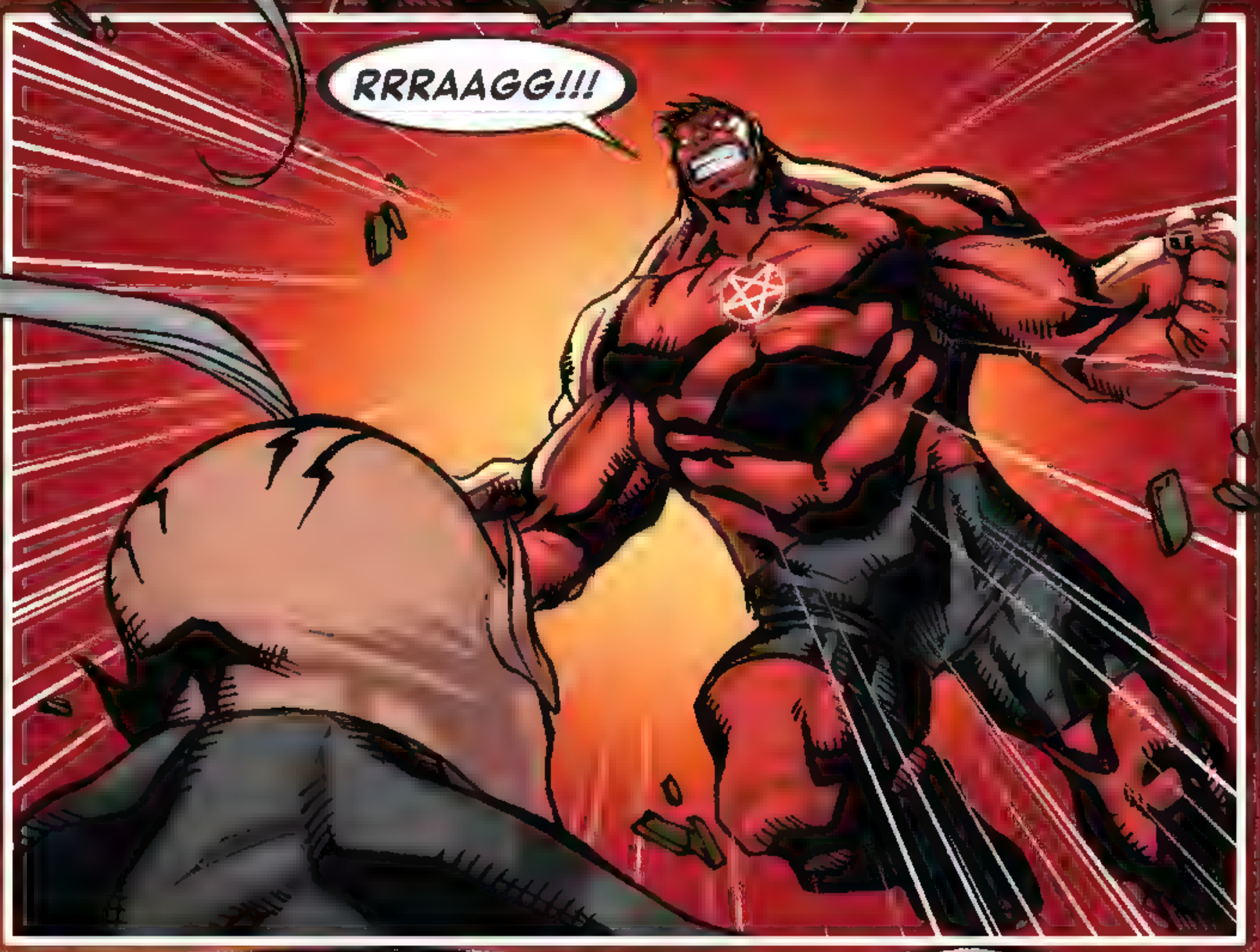
I CAN'T LET YOU TAKE IT FROM ME. NOT FOR MEPHISTO.



ALL
RIGHT. I SEE
HOW THIS HAS
TO GO.



RRRAAGG!!!

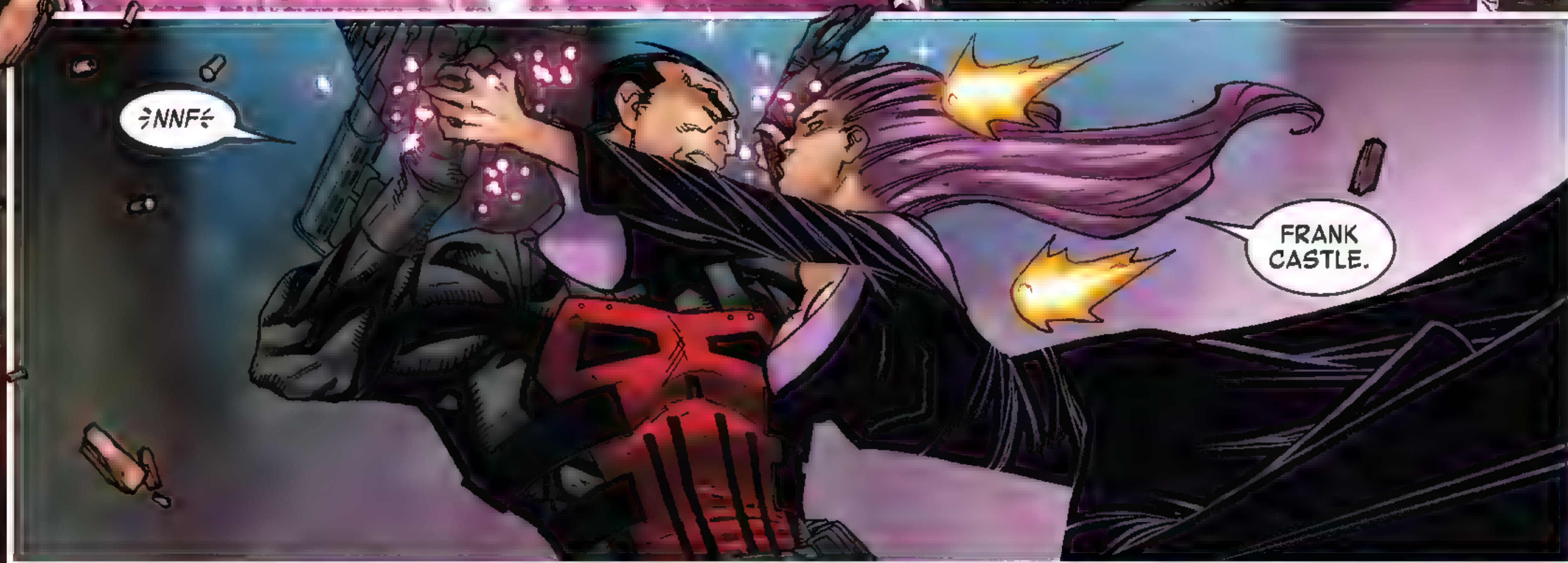


OKAY,
GUIDO. YOU
HATE THAT
GUY--I GET
IT.

BUT JUST
LISTEN UP FOR
A SECOND. I CAN
HELP YOU. BECAUSE
HERE'S THE TRUTH,
PAL--

--MEPHISTO'S
NOT THE ONLY
RED DEVIL DOWN
IN HELL TODAY.







I YIELD. I
YIELD!!!

SMART
CHOICE, SON.



YESSSSSSS!



HELL IS
MINE. LET US
HERALD MY RE-
ASCENSION WITH A
SYMPHONY OF
ANGUISH!!!



HOLD THE
MUSIC, PAL. WE
GOT YOU YOUR
THRONE BACK--
YOU OWE ME.

OH,
FINE.



THERE.

NICE!

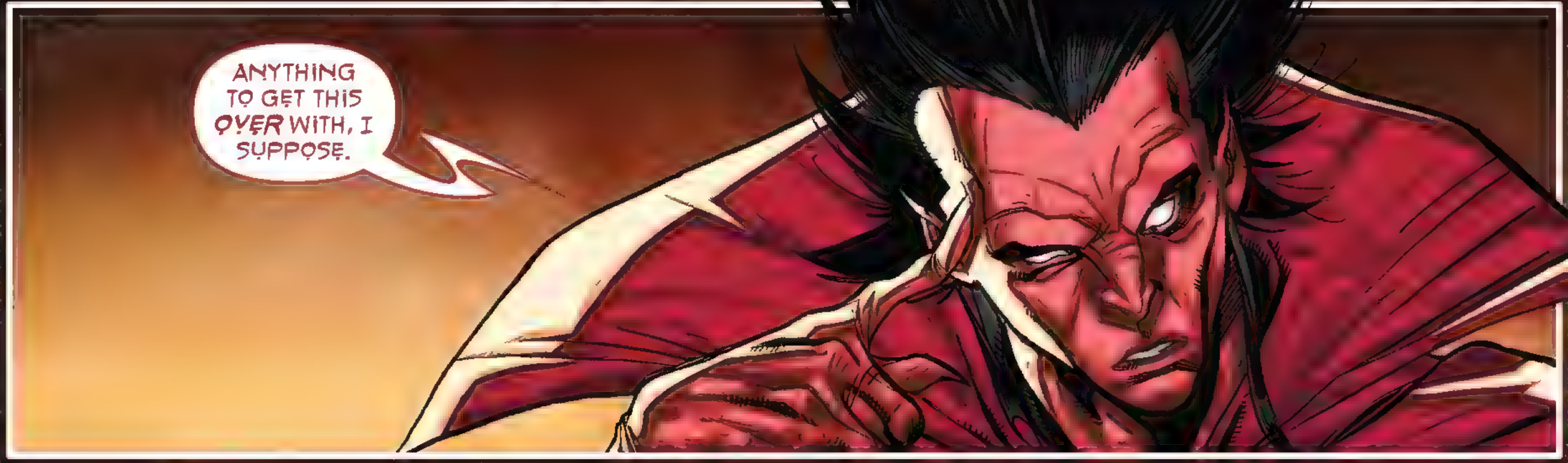


THAT'S NOT ALL YOU AGREED TO, MEPHISTO. LIVE UP TO YOUR END OF THE DEAL.

YOU DARE TO COMMAND THE LORD OF HELL?

PRETTY MUCH.

YOU KNOW HOW THIS WORKS, MEPHISTO. GET IT DONE.



ANYTHING TO GET THIS OVER WITH, I SUPPOSE.

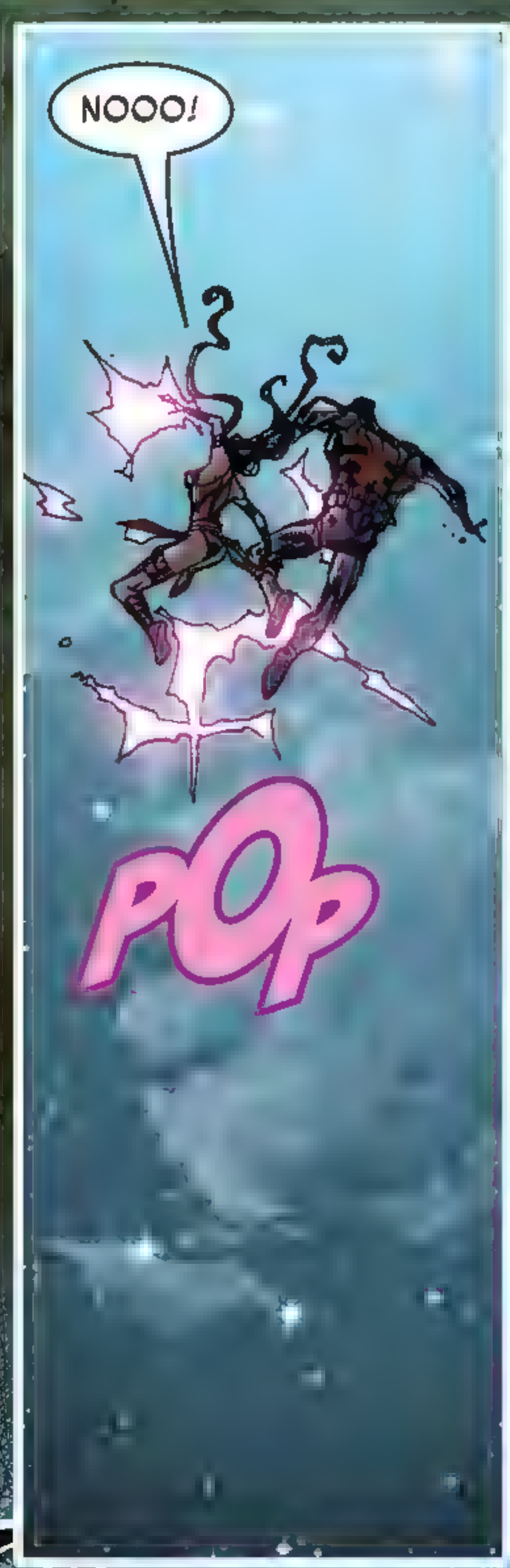


BEG FOR IT!!! BEG FOR MY MERCY!!!

NGH

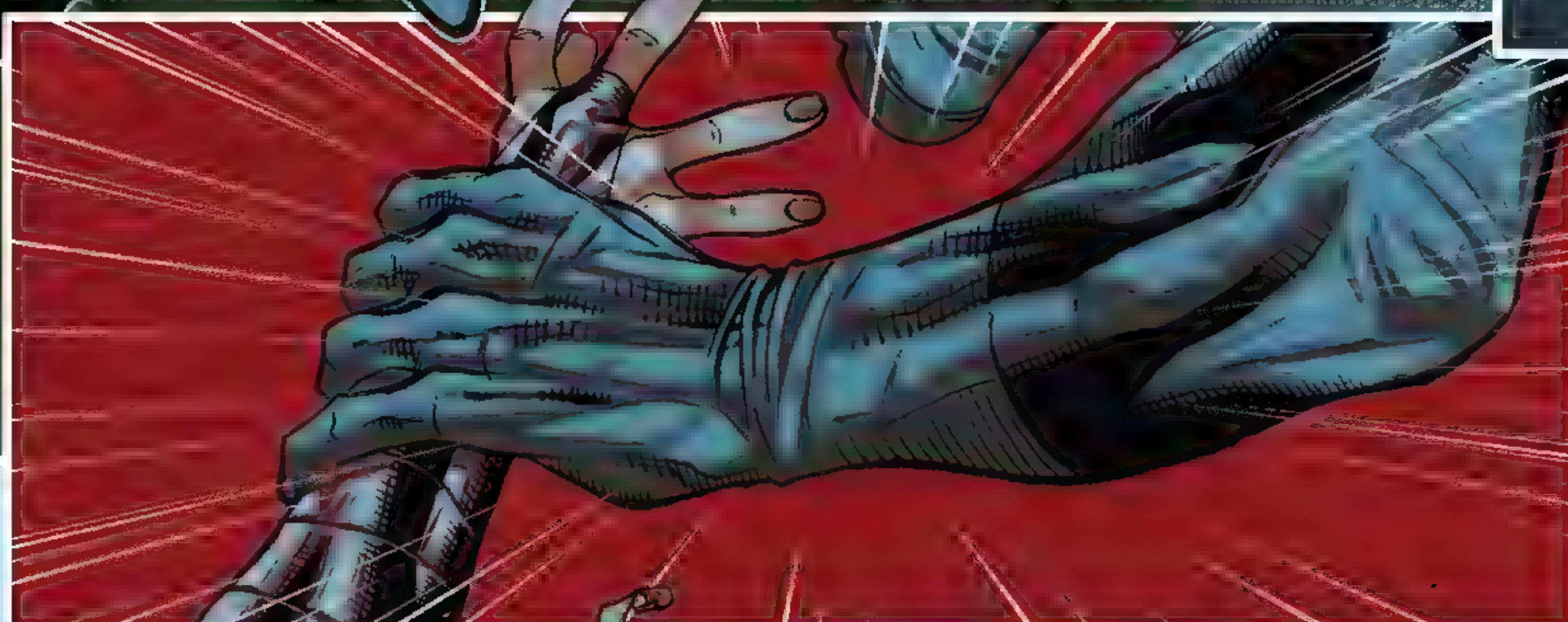


EH? WHAT... IS THAT? SOMETHING PULLING...



NOOO!

POP



KRAK THUP



THERE. AS PROMISED.

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?



I HAVE NEVER FELT...SO MANY... SO MANY DESPERATE FOR MY RELEASE!

IS THIS...IS THIS...



HEAVEN???



NOOOO!!!



NICE, RIGHT?
I NEVER THOUGHT
I'D BE ABLE TO REPLACE
THAT FEATHER--NOT
REALLY, BUT THIS...THIS
IS EVEN BETTER.

BUT, UH,
YOU MIGHT
WANT TO CLOSE
THAT GATE
THING.

WHAT?
WHY?

YOU BRING
SOME SORT OF SOUL-
VACUUM INTO MY KINGDOM,
AND YOU FOLLOW IT UP WITH
AN ENTIRE HEAVENLY
HOST?

AAAAARRRRR
GHHHHH

YOUR
SUFFERING WILL
BE LEGENDARY,
EVEN IN HELL!!!

AHEM.
I DO NOT
BELIEVE THAT
IS ENTIRELY
ACCURATE.





WE HAVE FULFILLED THE TERMS OF OUR AGREEMENT TO THE LETTER.

AND IF YOU REVIEW SECTION 134(A)(1)(X)(IV)(C) OF SUCH AGREEMENT, YOU WILL SEE THAT YOU ARE PROHIBITED FROM RETALIATORY ACTIONS OF ANY KIND IN ASSOCIATION WITH OUR FULFILLMENT OF SUCH AGREEMENT.

ANY SUCH ACTIONS WOULD BE DEEMED A MATERIAL BREACH, IN WHICH CASE YOU, AND THE ENTIRETY OF HELL, WOULD BELONG TO ME.

FRANKLY, I'M FINE EITHER WAY.



I AM THE VERY SOUL OF EVIL. YOU DARE TO MAKE AN ENEMY OF ME?

YOU MIGHT--MIGHT--BE MORE EVIL, BUT I'M DEFINITELY SMARTER.

YOU...WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

I'M THE LEADER. PAY ME A VISIT ANY TIME. THIS HAS ALL BEEN RATHER FUN.

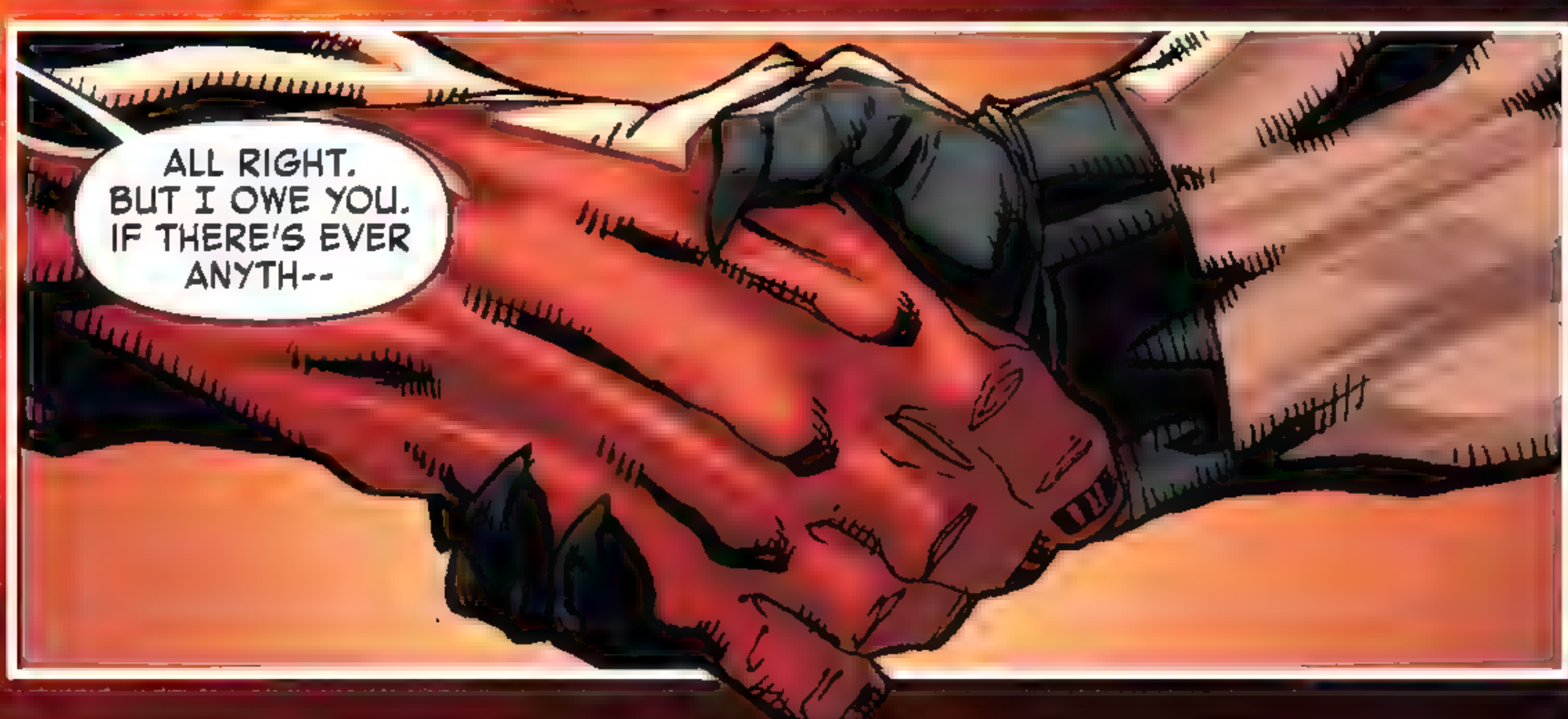


IT'S DONE. HE'S GOING TO SEND US HOME.



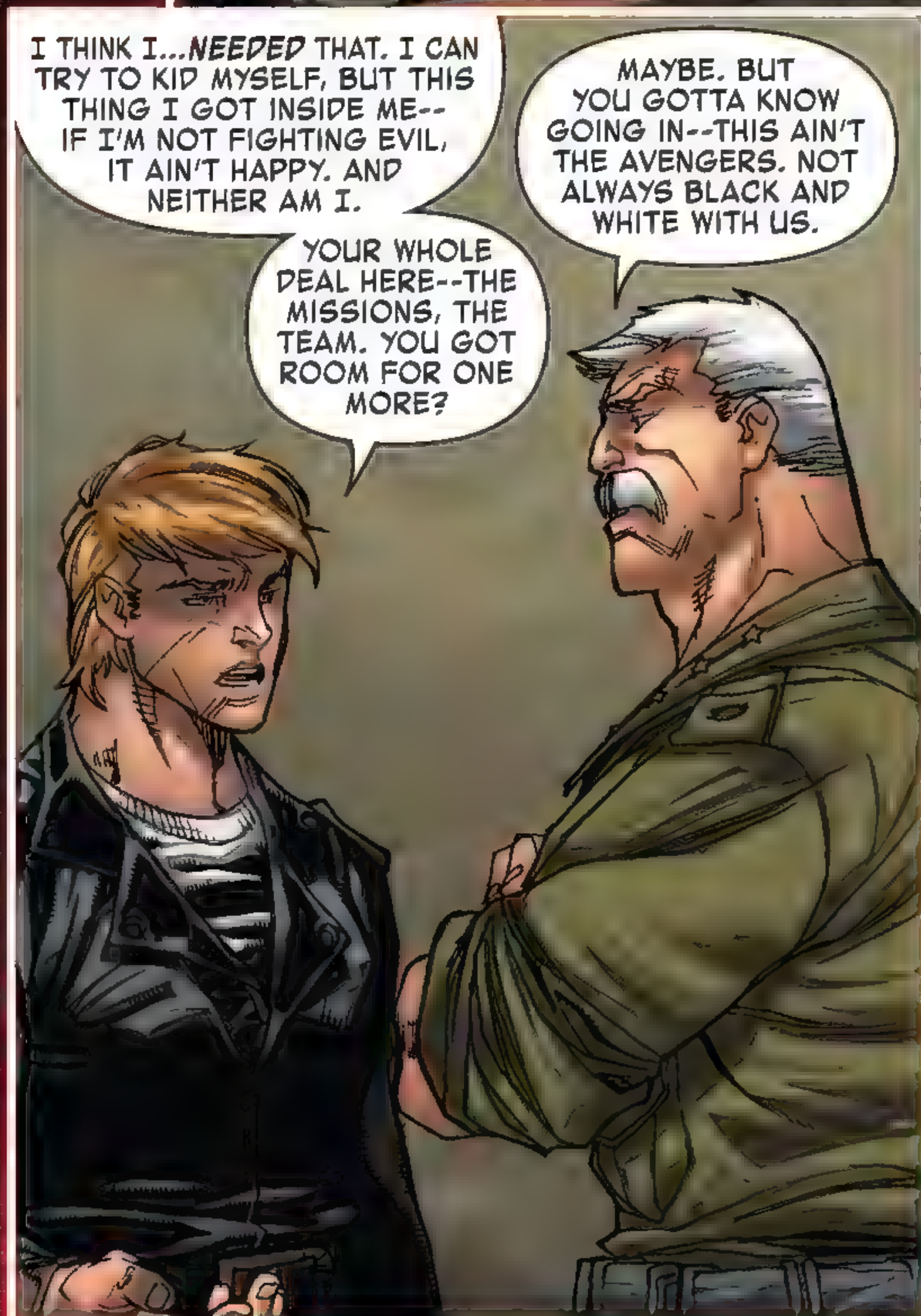
YOU MADE THE RIGHT DECISION. YOU HAVE NO BUSINESS IN HELL. YOU'RE MEANT FOR BETTER THINGS. WANT TO COME WITH US?

NO. NOT UNTIL I GET MY SOUL BACK. AND IT SEEMS LIKE IF THAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN, IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN HERE.



ALL RIGHT. BUT I OWE YOU. IF THERE'S EVER ANYTH--





THUNDERBOLTS



CHARLES SOULE

CARLO BARBERI

ALL-NEW
**MARVEL
NOW!**

023

THE CRUCIBLE.
THUNDERBOLTS HQ.

NICE.

YOU
HAVE LOVELY
HANDWRITING,
DEADPOOL.

THANK YOU,
ELEKTRA. I THINK
IT'S A CRIME, THE
WAY SCHOOLS TODAY
NEGLECT THE
FUNDAMENTALS.

ALL RIGHT,
DEADPOOL. YOUR
NAME CAME OUT OF
THE HAT, AND THAT MEANS,
GOD HELP US, YOU GET
TO CHOOSE THE NEXT
MISSION. WHAT'S IT
GONNA BE, SON?

I HAVE BEEN
WAITING FOR THIS,
LIKE YOU WOULD NOT
BELIEVE. OKAY, HERE'S
WHAT WE'RE GOING TO
DO. FIRST, WE NEED
TO KIDNAP RYAN
REYNOLDS. THEN--

WAIT.

I HAVE SOMETHING TO
ASK YOU. I EXPECT
YOU TO SAY NO, BUT
I FIGURE IT'S WORTH
A SHOT.

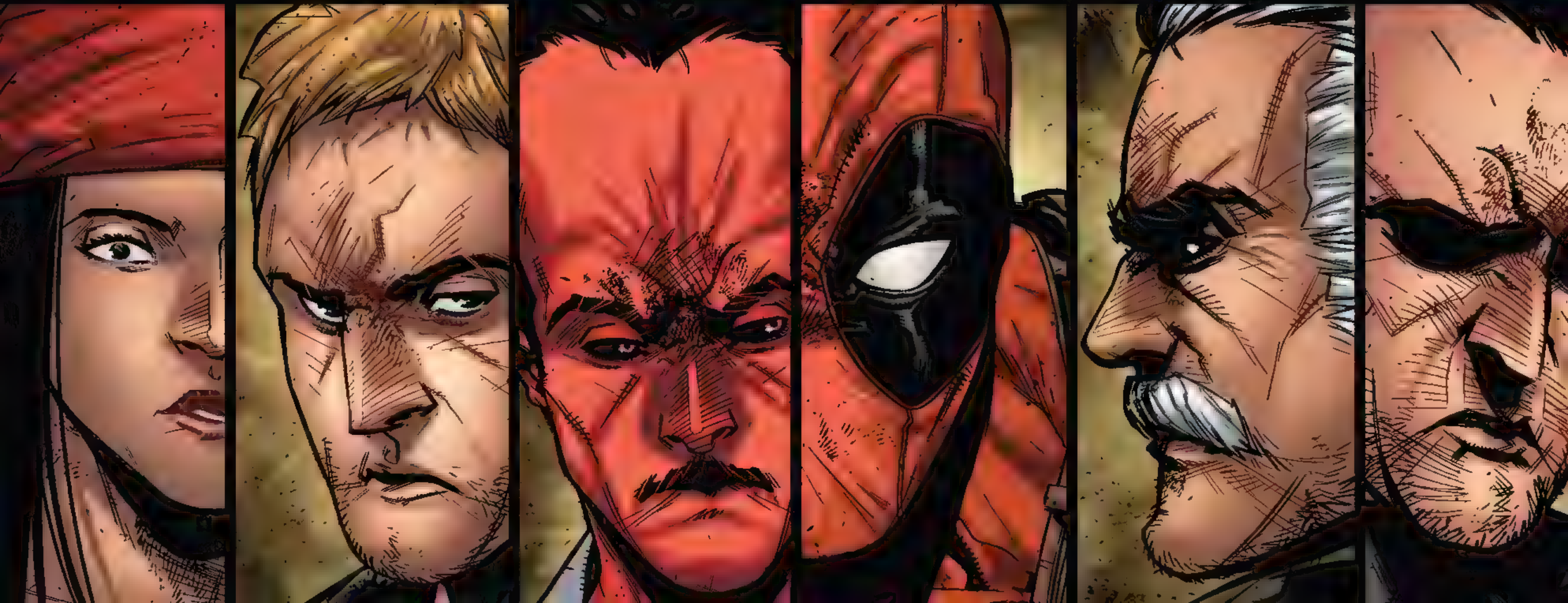
COLOR
ME...INTRIGUED,
FLASH. PRAY
CONTINUE.

LET ME HAVE
THIS ONE. LET
ME CALL THIS
MISSION.

AND SUDDENLY I
FIND MYSELF DEEPLY
UNINTERESTED.

WHY?

BECAUSE
I'M LEAVING
THE TEAM.





THIS ISN'T A MILITARY OUTFIT, THOMPSON--YOU CAN LEAVE WHENEVER YOU WANT. BUT WE'RE DOING GOOD WORK HERE. WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO?

THE GOALS ARE GOOD--GENERALLY-- BUT THE *METHODS*... I DON'T WANT TO BE A CLICHE, ROSS, BUT THIS ISN'T WHAT I SIGNED UP FOR.

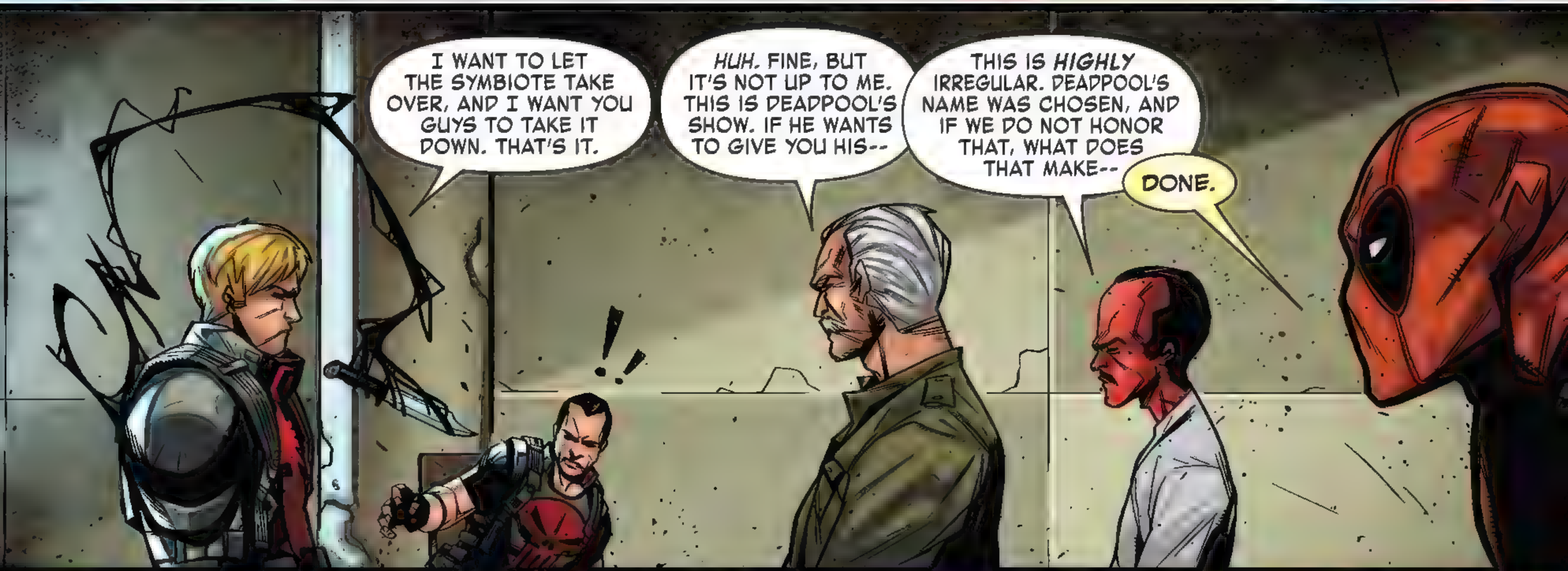
IT'S HARD ENOUGH TO HOLD THE SYMBIOTE BACK AS IT IS--IT *ALWAYS* WANTS ME TO GO FURTHER, TO BE MORE BRUTAL, TO KILL WHETHER I NEED TO OR NOT. IT WANTS *CONTROL*.

AND AROUND YOU GUYS--IT SEEMS LIKE IT NEVER TAKES MUCH TO GET US INTO A SITUATION WHERE KILLING IS THE EASIEST WAY OUT.

NO OFFENSE.



WE ALL KNOW WHAT WE ARE. THIS ISN'T A FOOTBALL GAME, QUARTERBACK. IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE WAY WE WORK, YOU PROBABLY *SHOULD* GO.

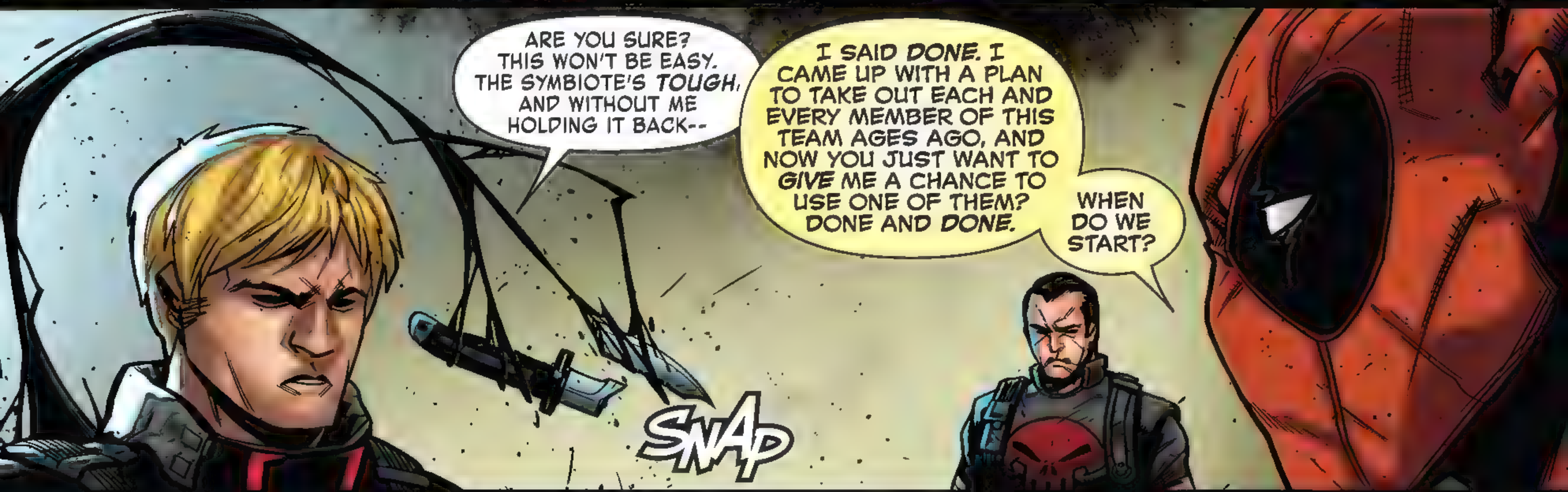


I WANT TO LET THE SYMBIOTE TAKE OVER, AND I WANT YOU GUYS TO TAKE IT DOWN. THAT'S IT.

HUH. FINE, BUT IT'S NOT UP TO ME. THIS IS DEADPOOL'S SHOW. IF HE WANTS TO GIVE YOU HIS--

THIS IS *HIGHLY* IRREGULAR. DEADPOOL'S NAME WAS CHOSEN, AND IF WE DO NOT HONOR THAT, WHAT DOES THAT MAKE--

DONE.

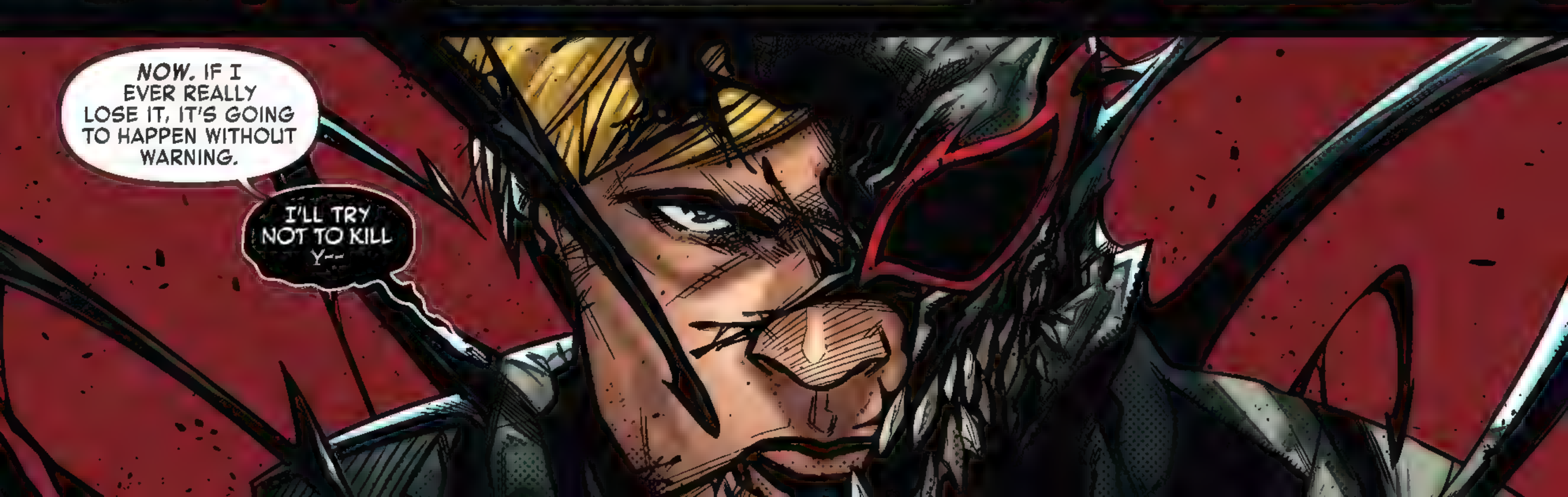


ARE YOU SURE? THIS WON'T BE EASY. THE SYMBIOTE'S TOUGH, AND WITHOUT ME HOLDING IT BACK--

I SAID *DONE*. I CAME UP WITH A PLAN TO TAKE OUT EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF THIS TEAM AGES AGO, AND NOW YOU JUST WANT TO GIVE ME A CHANCE TO USE ONE OF THEM? *DONE AND DONE*.

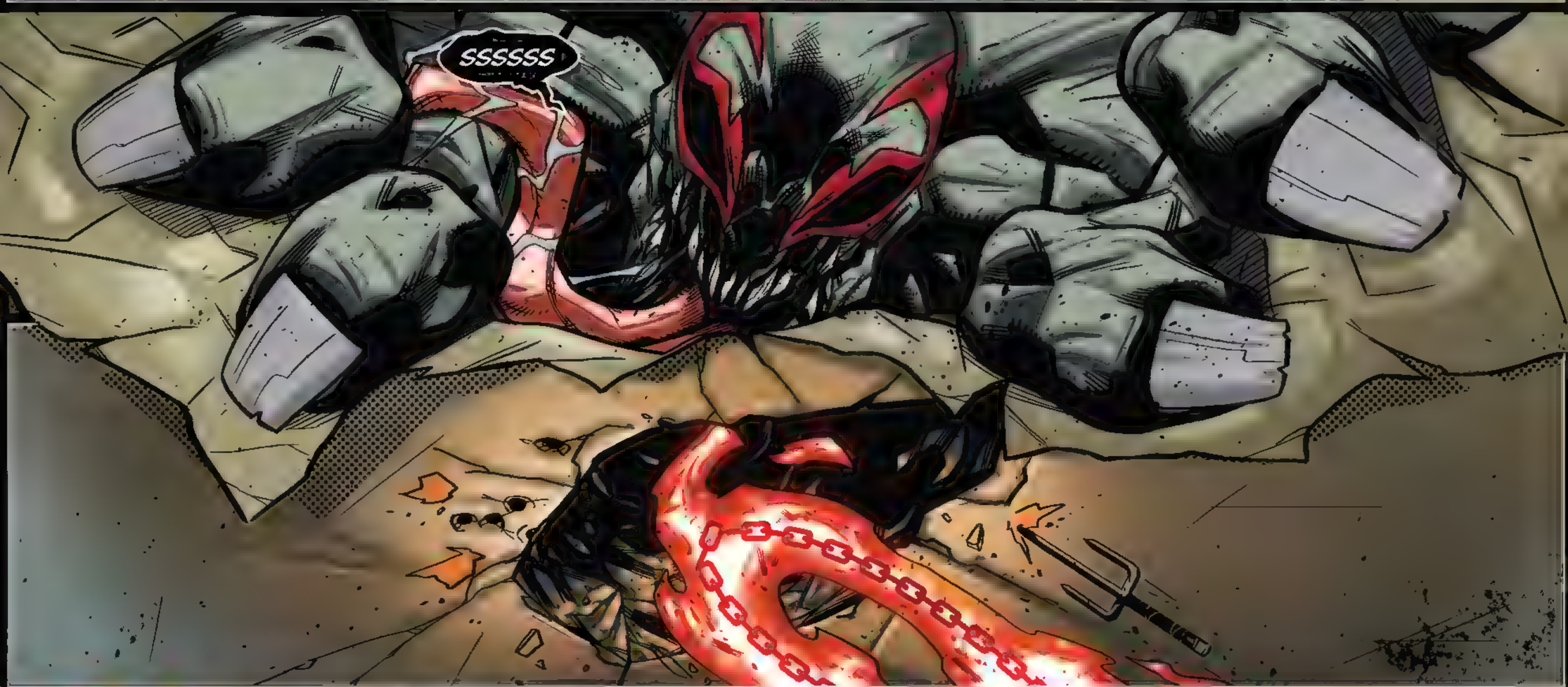
WHEN DO WE START?

SNAP



NOW. IF I EVER REALLY LOSE IT, IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN WITHOUT WARNING.

I'LL TRY NOT TO KILL Y--



SOON.

HERE, KITTY
KITTY.

SSSSS

HA!

NNGH!

YOU CAME
AFTER ME FIRST?
YOU KNOW I'M MADE
OF FIRE? YOUR BIG
WEAKNESS?

YEAH?

FLAME ON,
THEN. BURN THIS
ONE'S LUNGS
OUT.

DAMN
YOU!

MY HOST THINKS
YOU SHOULDN'T EXIST.
YOU KNOW THAT? HE THINKS
YOU'RE AN ABOMINATION. HE
PRETENDS HE LIKES YOU, BUT
HE ISN'T GOING TO SHED
ONE TEAR OVER YOU
AFTER WE KILL YOU.

HELLFIRE AIN'T
ALL I GOT, PAL.
THING LIKE YOU, MUST
HAVE PLENTY OF SIN IN
YOUR PAST. PENANCE
STARE'S GONNA HAVE
A FIELD DAY
WITH YOU.



YAAAAARGH!!!

SO...
MUCH...SIN...
SO...MANY...
LIVES...

HEH.

SPLACK



INCENDIARY
BULLETS. I HAVE
ENOUGH FOR BOTH OF
US. YOU KNOW THE BASE
LAYOUT BETTER THAN I
DO--WE CAN CANVAS
TOGETHER AND TAKE
THAT THING OUT.

YOU AREN'T
CONCERNED ABOUT
ACCIDENTALLY KILLING
THOMPSON AS
WELL?

NO. I'M
NOT.



YOU HEARD HIM.
HE WANTS US TO TAKE
HIM DOWN. WAY I SEE
IT, THE MONSTER WON'T
LET HIM KILL HIMSELF,
SO HE'S ASKING
US TO DO IT.

FIRST
THING HE'S
DONE THAT MAKES
ME RESPECT
HIM.

YOU'RE HERE
BECAUSE I CAN
RELY ON YOU. YOU
ASKED ME NOT LONG
AGO IF I TRUST
YOU. WELL, NOW
YOU KNOW.

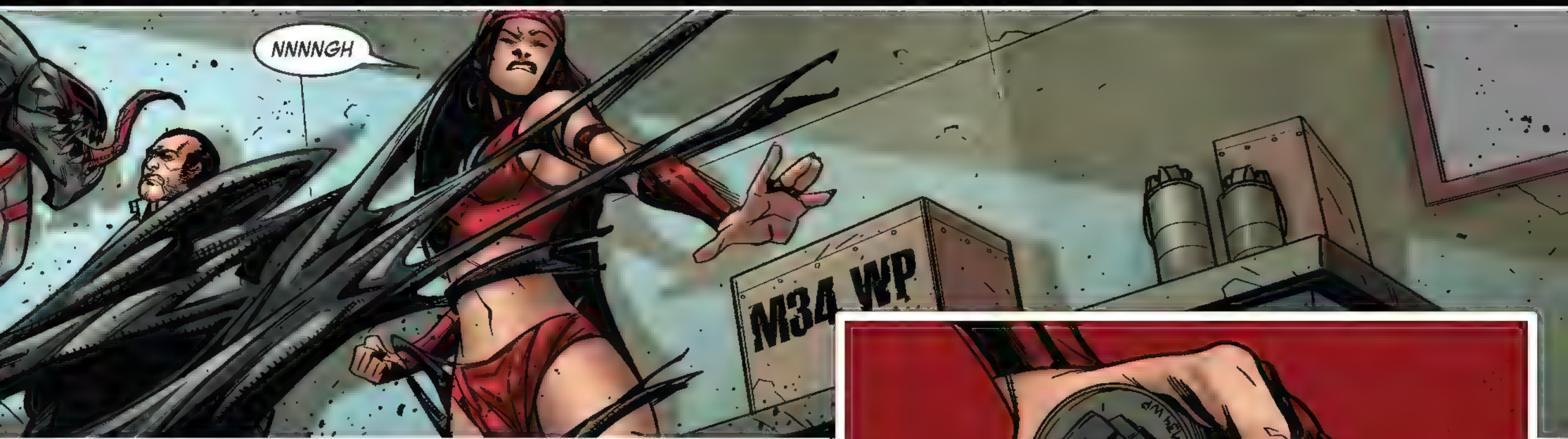
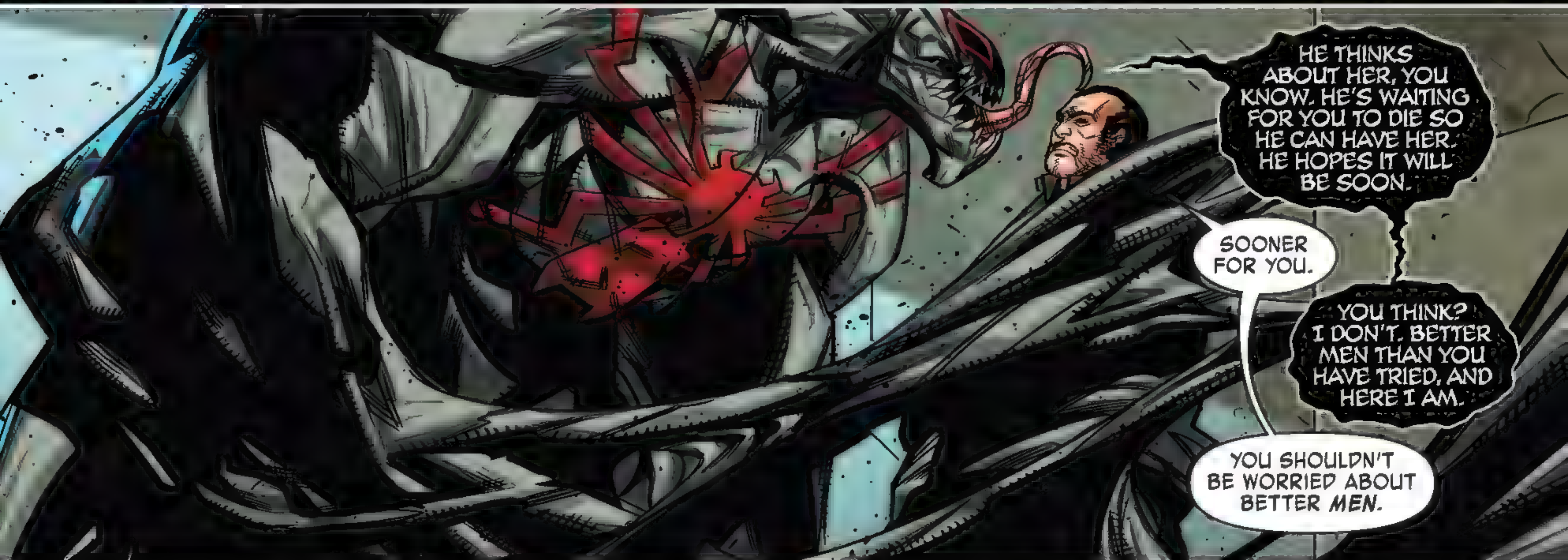


THIS ISN'T
ABOUT TRUST,
CASTLE. WE'RE
KILLERS, BUT
WE'RE NOT
MURDERERS.

THOMPSON
DIDN'T ASK US
TO KILL *HIM*, HE
ASKED US TO
KILL *IT*.



WHAT'S THE
DIFFERENCE?





VISION
ALMOST GONE.
MAYBE 20%.

I'M SORRY,
FRANK--IT WAS
THE ONLY WAY I
COULD SEE TO
GET US FREE.

NOT COMPLAINING.
WHITE PHOSPHOROUS.
RIGHT CALL. YOU
KILL IT?



DIE DIE DIE
DIE DIE DIE
DIE DIE!!!

NO. WE NEED
TO RUN. I'LL
GUIDE YOU.



HERE!



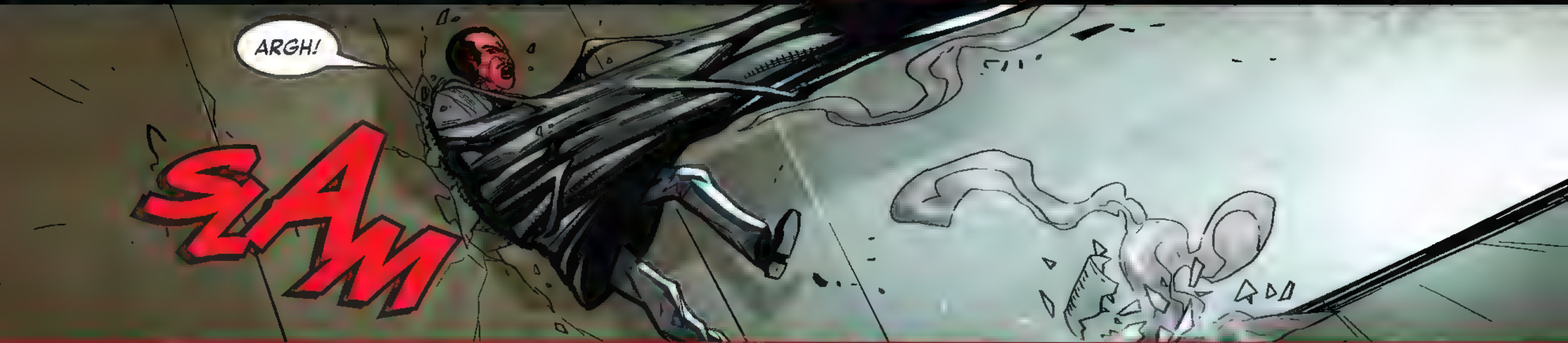
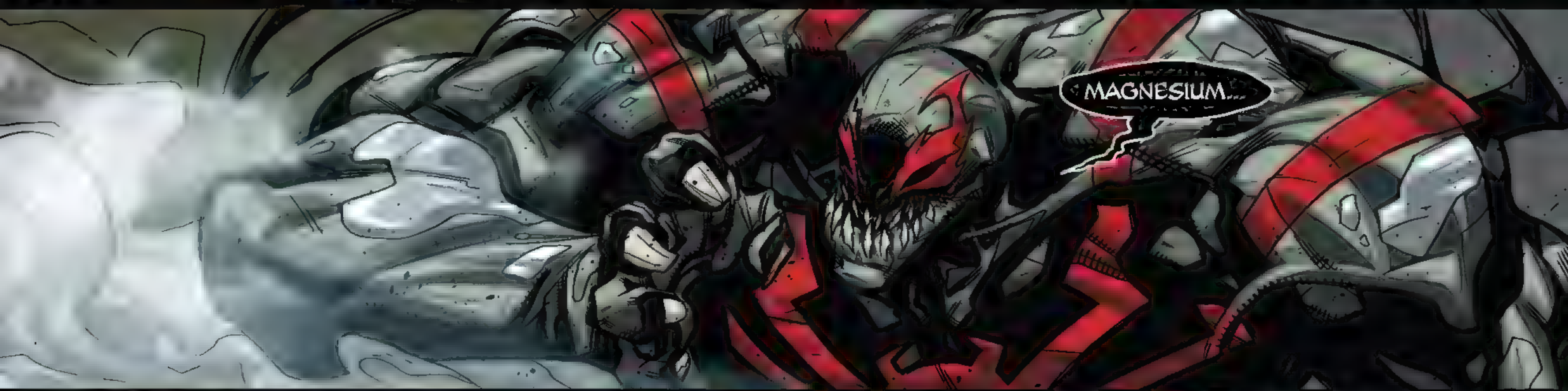
PULL!

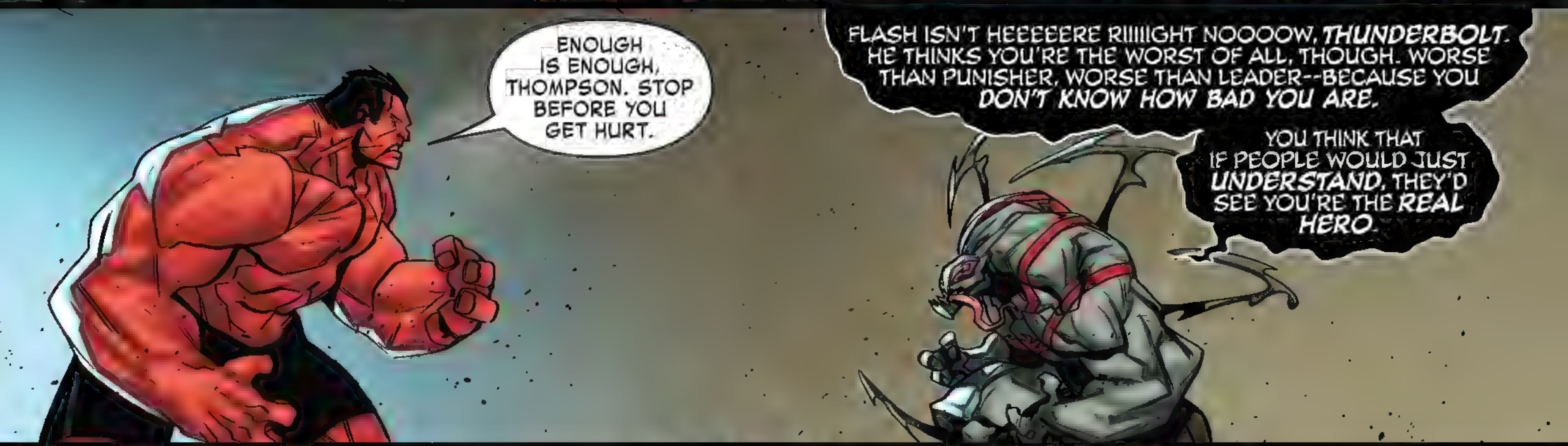
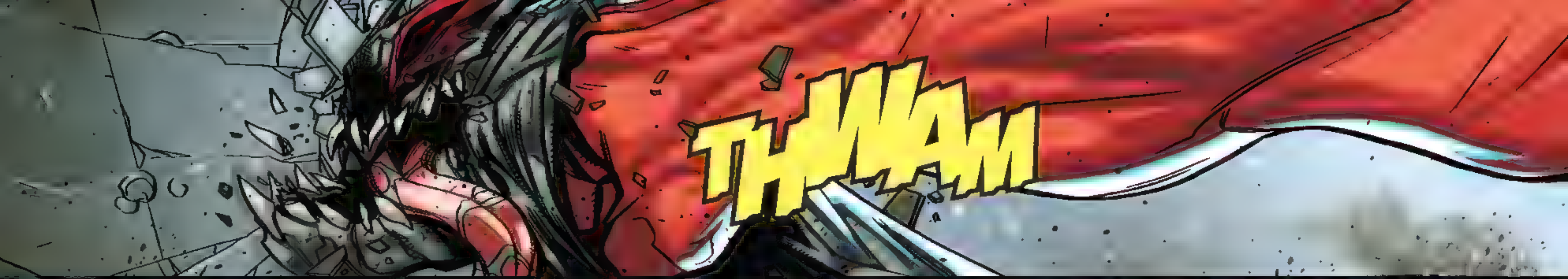


THIS WON'T
KEEP ME OUT.
NOTHING WILL
KEEP ME OUT. I
ALWAYS FIND A WAY.
I ALWAYS FIND
A WAY!!!
HAHAHAHAHA



EHP?
WHAT IS
THIS? SOME
POWDER?







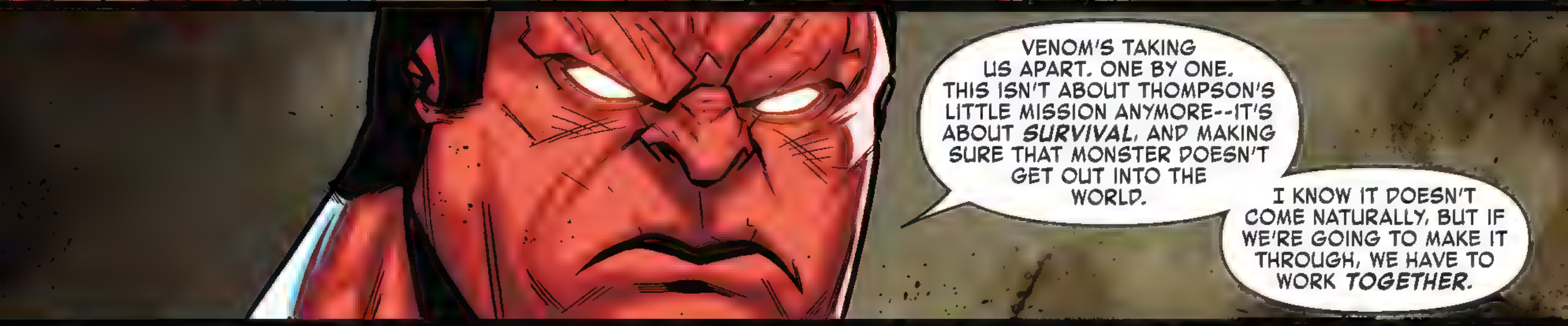
ARE ANY OF YOU OUT OF THE FIGHT?

I'M GOOD. TOOK ME A LITTLE WHILE, BUT I'M COMING BACK.

I AM DONE WITH THIS. I DO NOT WISH TO FIGHT THE MONSTER, AND I WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE.

NO.

VISION'S ALMOST BACK. I WANT THAT THING DEAD.



VENOM'S TAKING US APART. ONE BY ONE. THIS ISN'T ABOUT THOMPSON'S LITTLE MISSION ANYMORE--IT'S ABOUT *SURVIVAL*, AND MAKING SURE THAT MONSTER DOESN'T GET OUT INTO THE WORLD.

I KNOW IT DOESN'T COME NATURALLY, BUT IF WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT THROUGH, WE HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER.



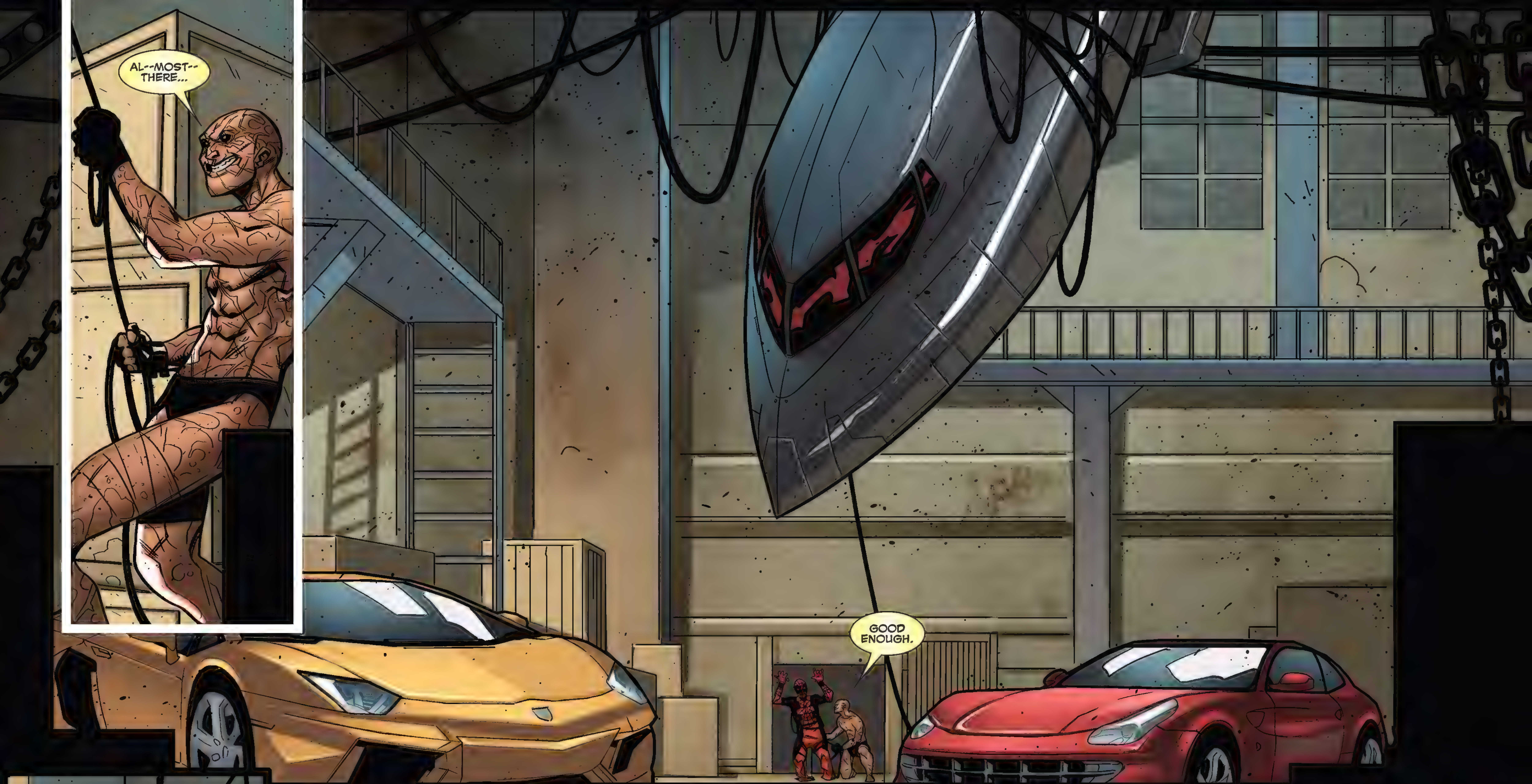
I HAVE A PLAN. WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY.

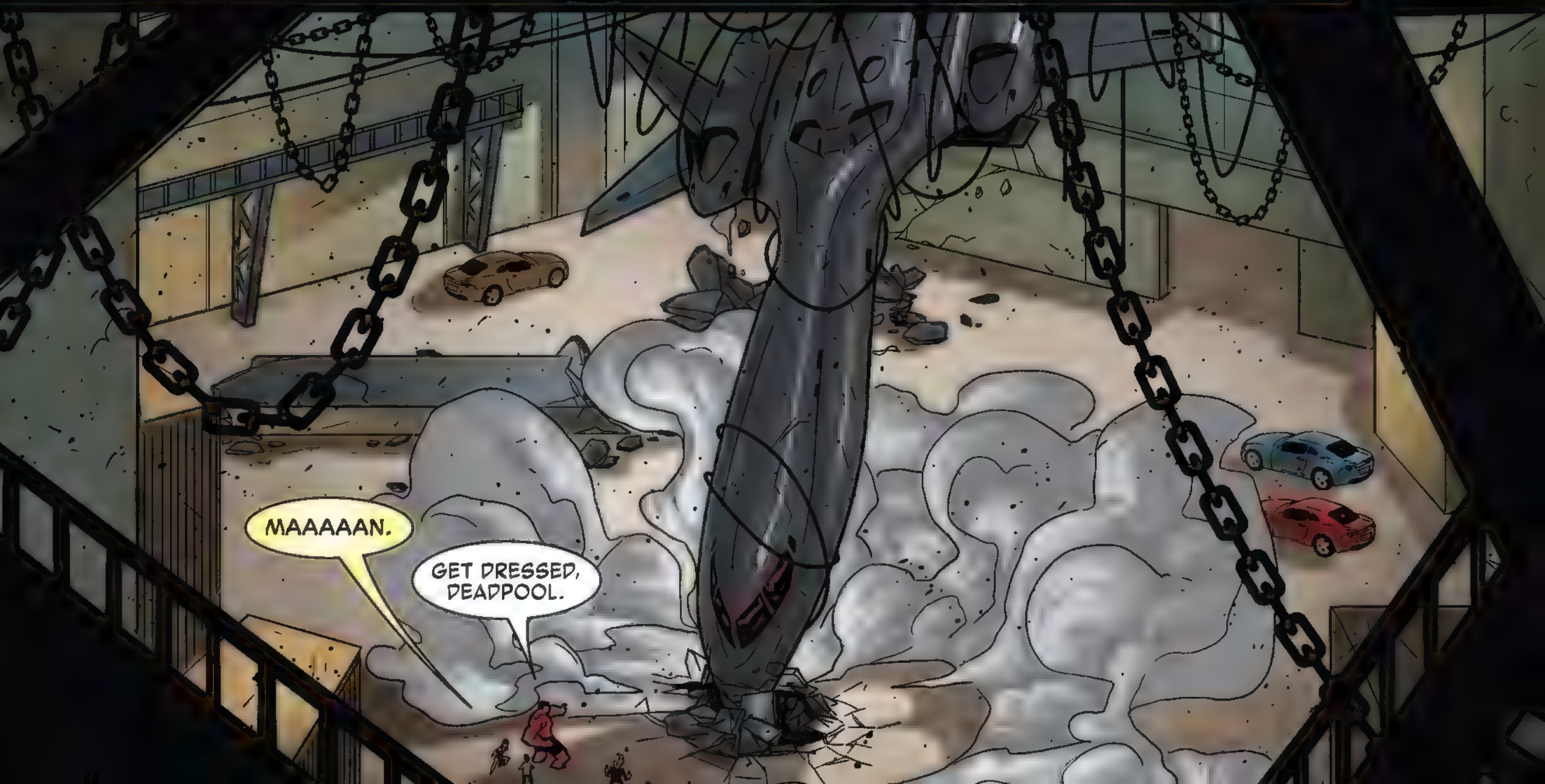
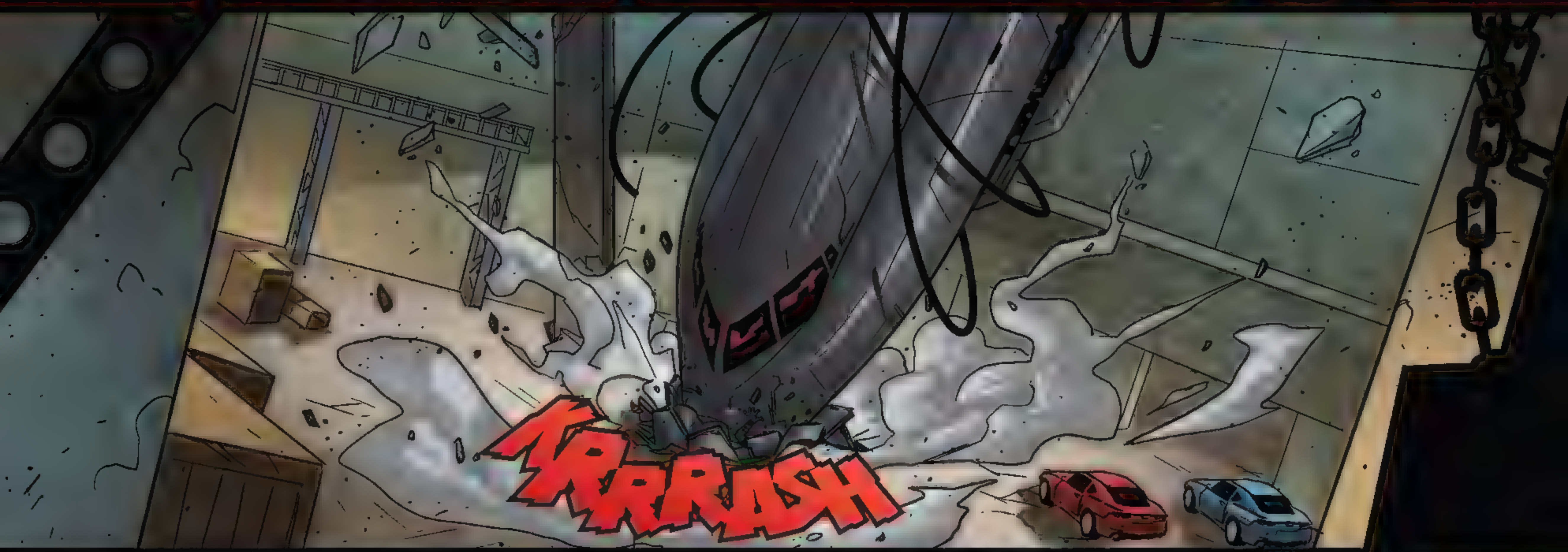
WE AREN'T A TEAM. I KNOW THAT. BUT MAYBE JUST THIS ONCE WE CAN ACT LIKE ONE. I'LL NEED EACH AND EVERY ONE OF--

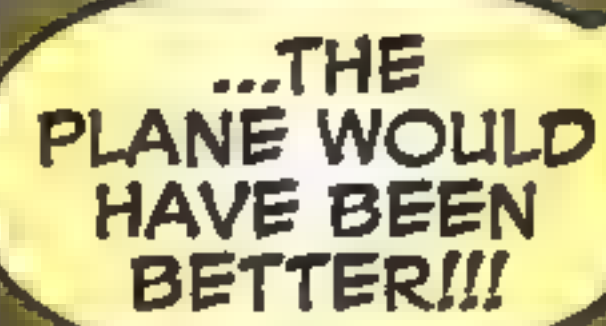
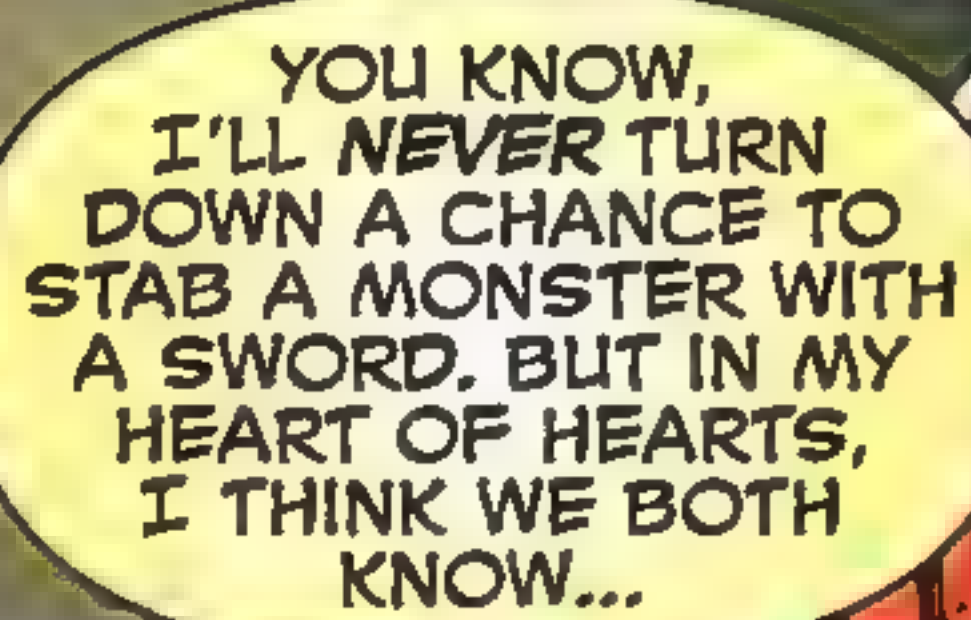
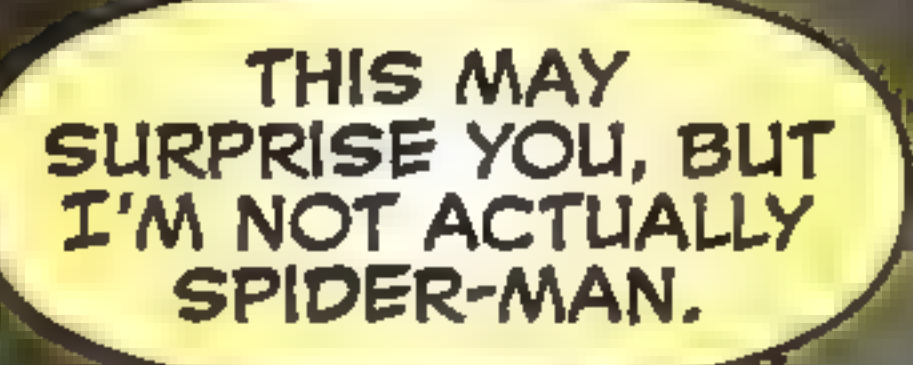
...



WHERE'S DEADPOOL?









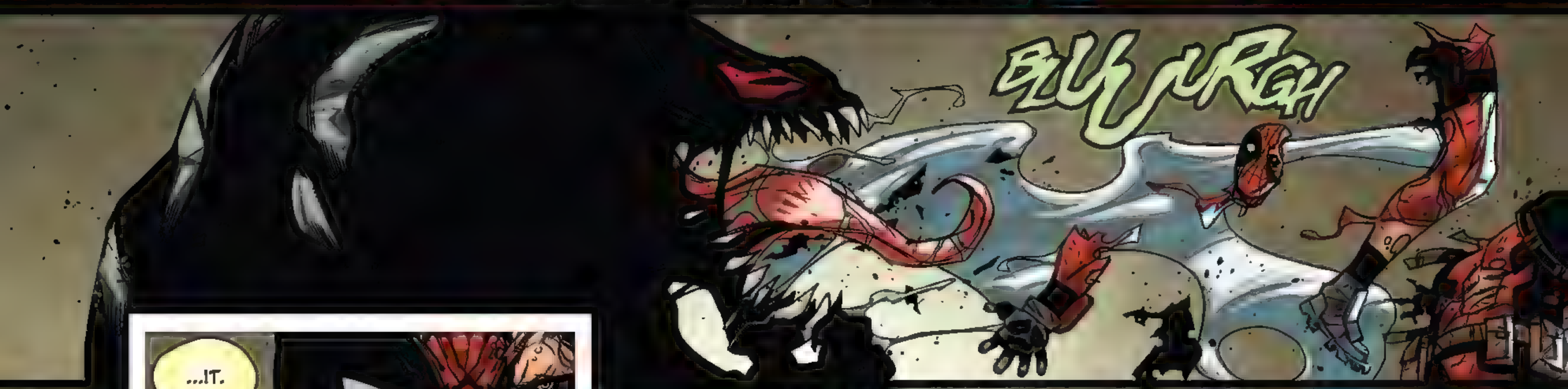
CHOKE...
ON...



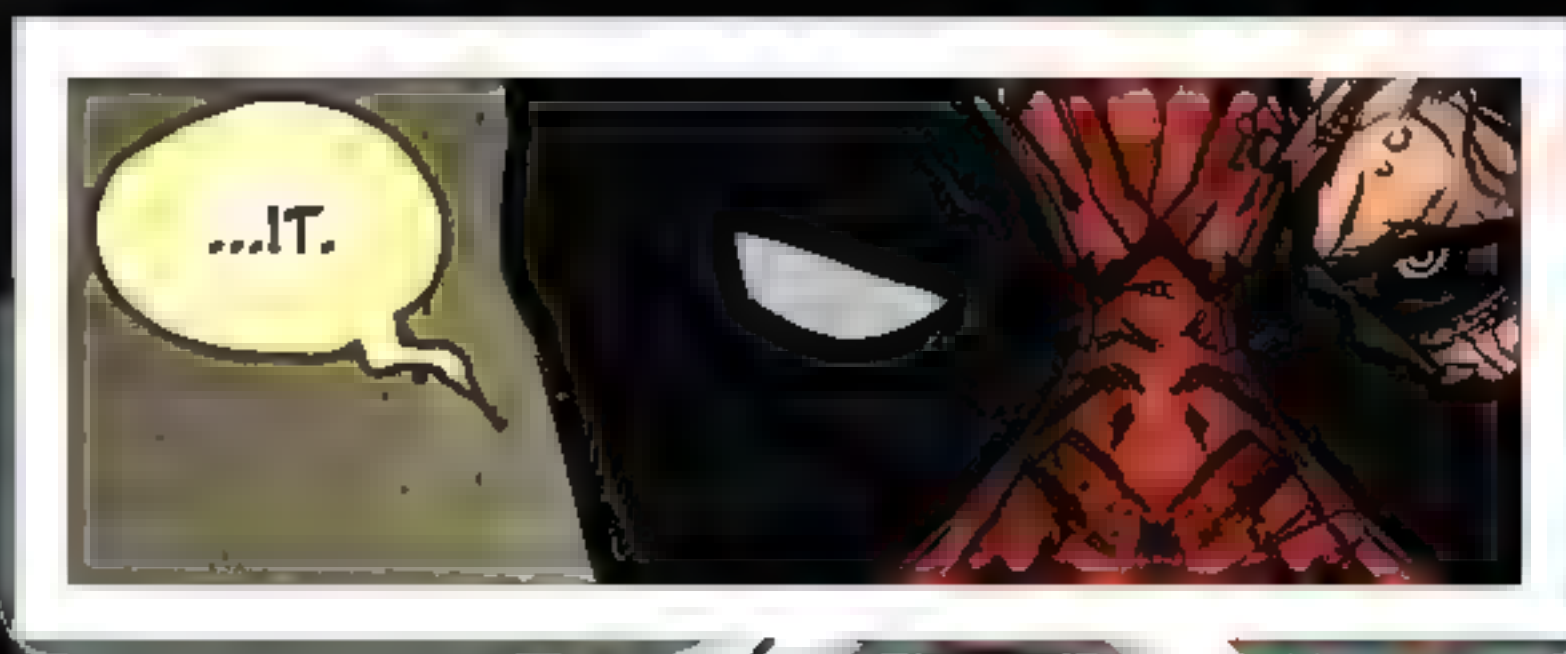
SSSSS



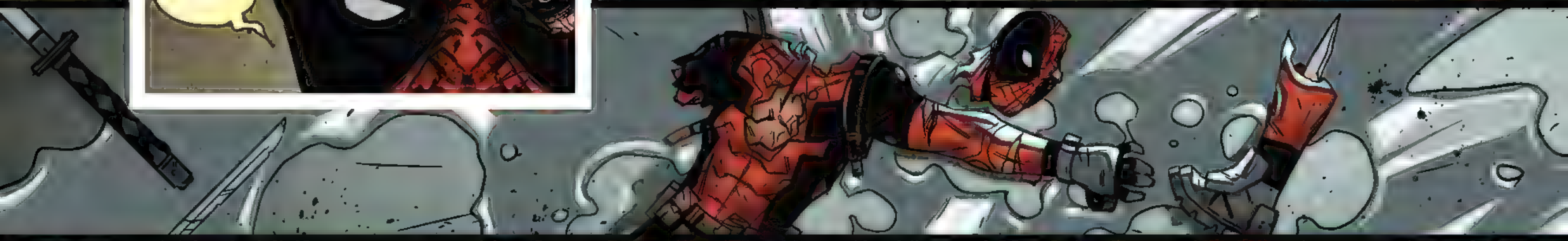
URK



BLYURGH



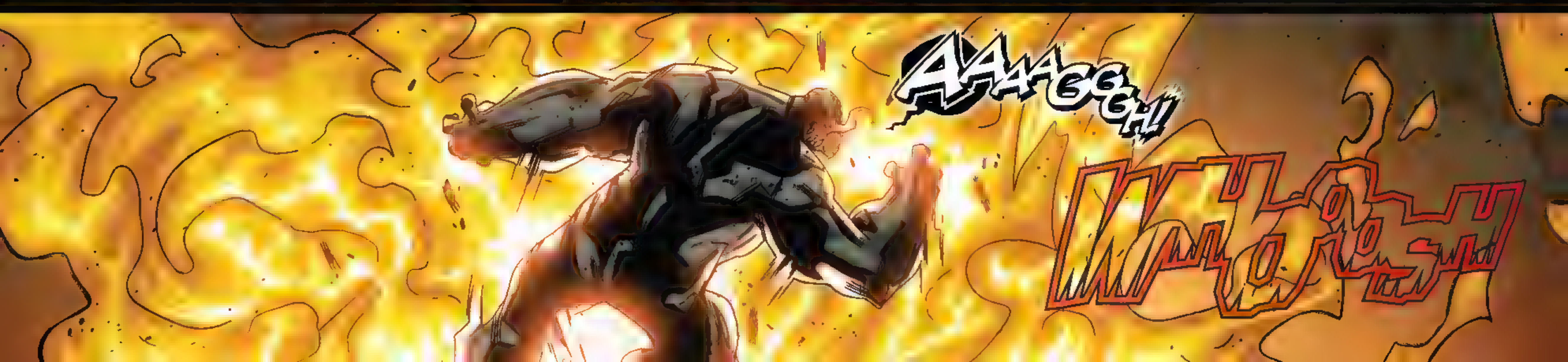
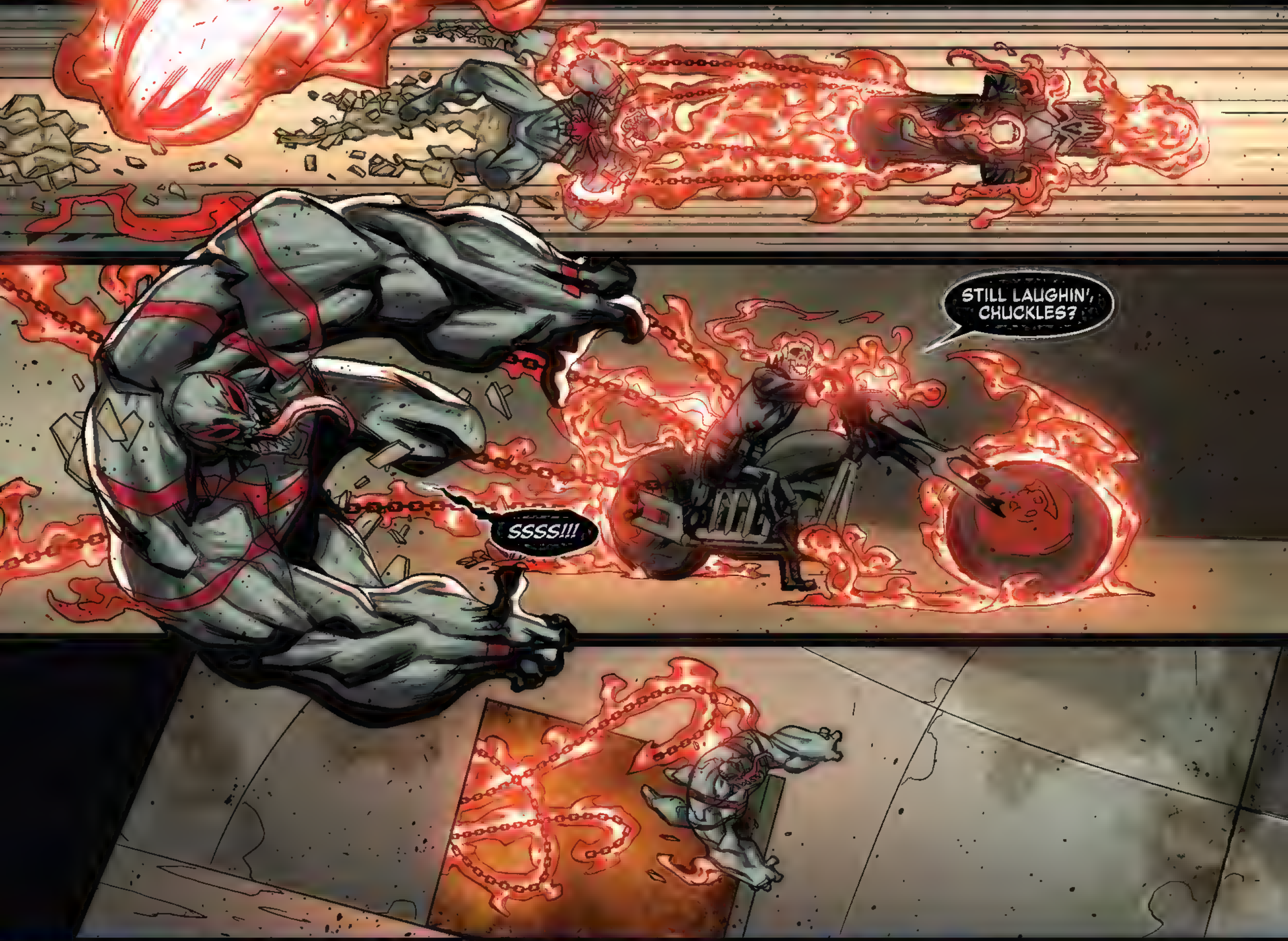
...IT.

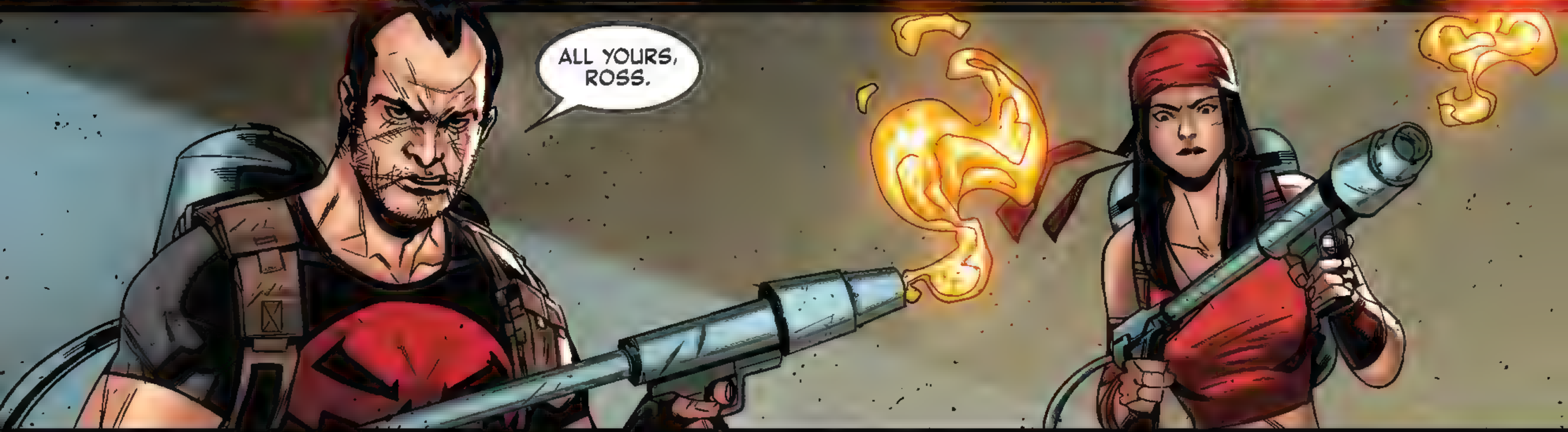


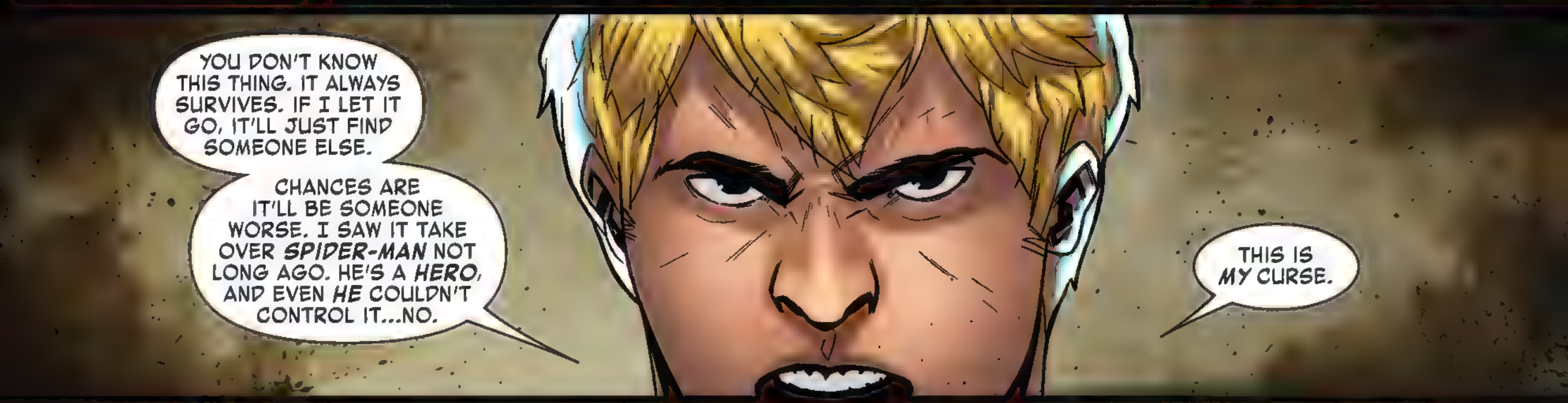
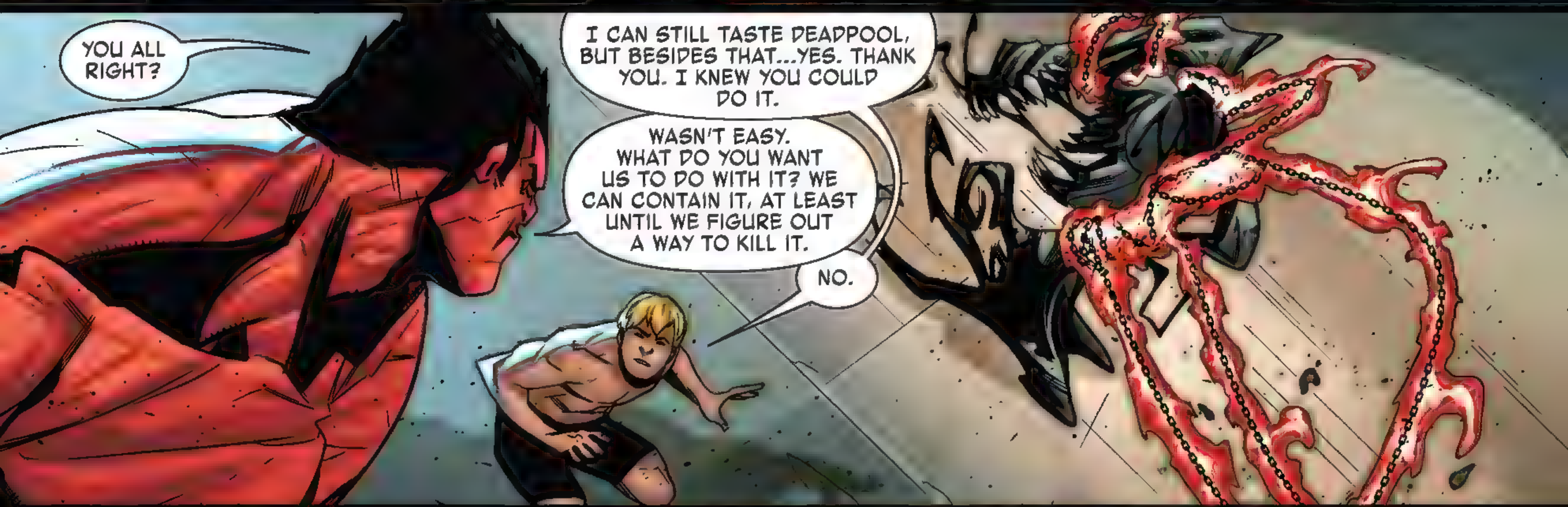
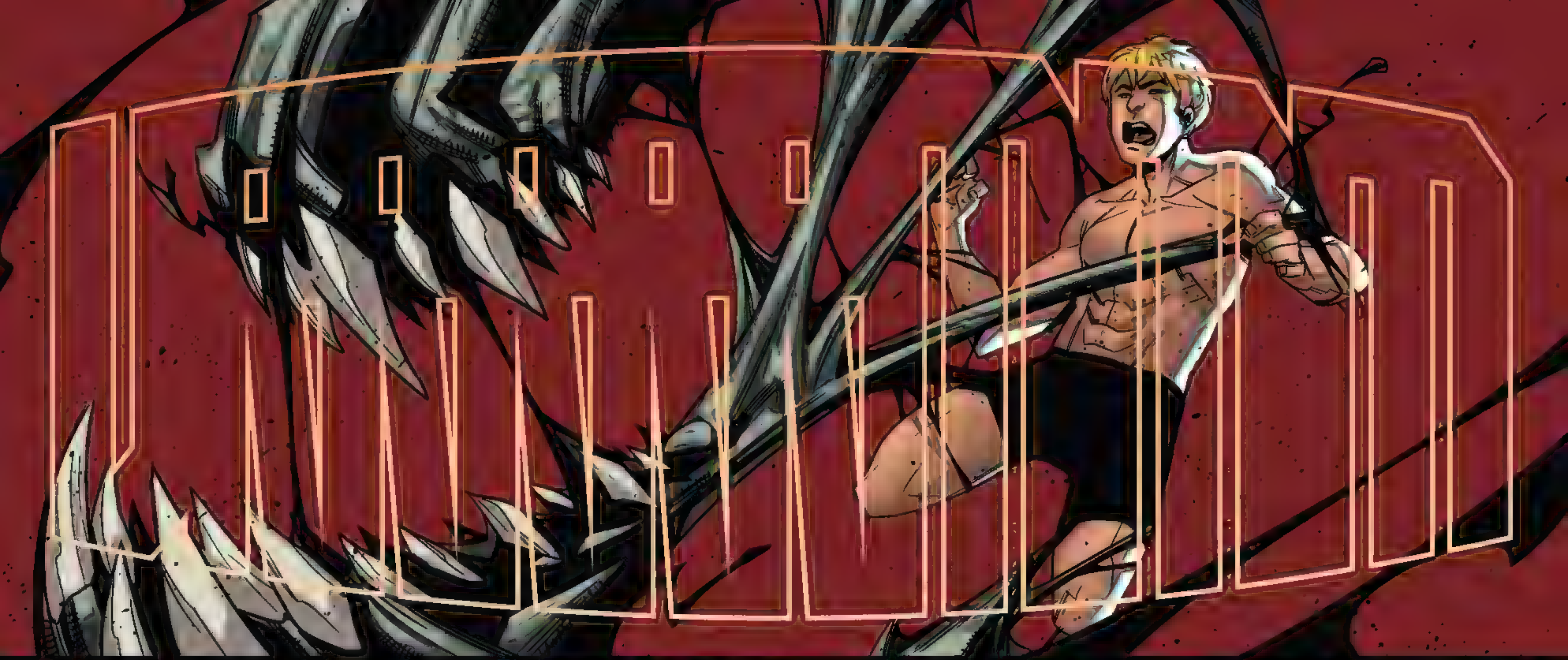
STAB



RRAHH!



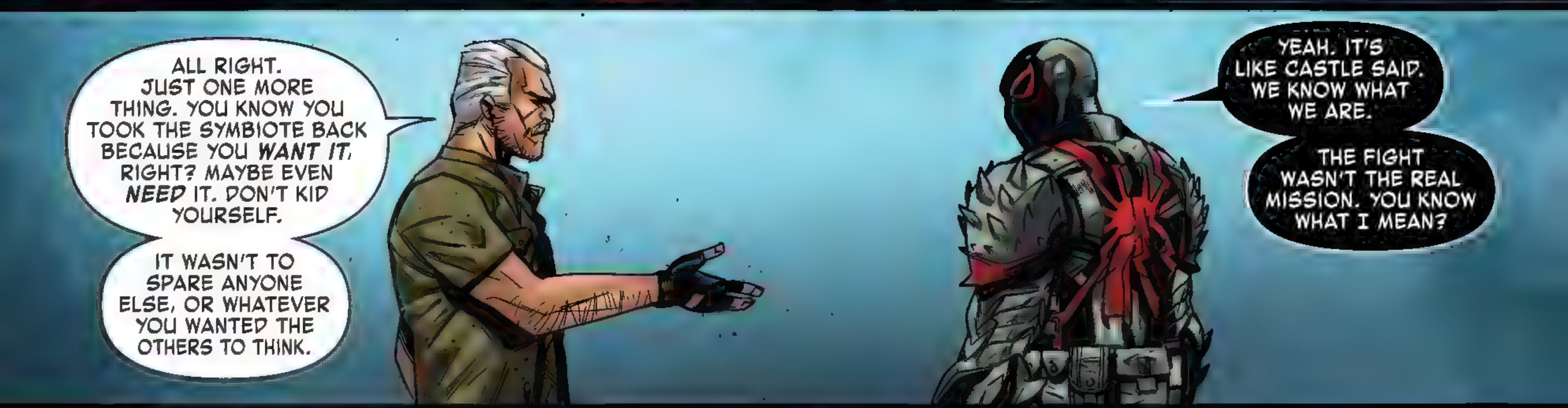






YOU SURE
YOU WANT TO
GO? PLENTY FOR
YOU TO DO
HERE.

I KNOW.
BUT IT'S
TIME.



ALL RIGHT.
JUST ONE MORE
THING. YOU KNOW YOU
TOOK THE SYMBIOTE BACK
BECAUSE YOU WANT IT,
RIGHT? MAYBE EVEN
NEED IT. DON'T KID
YOURSELF.

IT WASN'T TO
SPARE ANYONE
ELSE, OR WHATEVER
YOU WANTED THE
OTHERS TO THINK.

YEAH. IT'S
LIKE CASTLE SAID.
WE KNOW WHAT
WE ARE.

THE FIGHT
WASN'T THE REAL
MISSION. YOU KNOW
WHAT I MEAN?



I DO.

YOU WANTED
TO BE SURE THAT
IF YOU LEFT, IF THE
THING TOOK OVER, THAT
SOMEONE OUT THERE
COULD STOP IT.
COULD STOP YOU.

NOW WE
KNOW. WE CAN
DO IT. AND IF WE
HAVE TO, WE
WILL.



THE SYMBIOTE--
IT SAID SOMETHING.
ABOUT ME. HOW YOU
SEE ME. WAS IT
LYING?

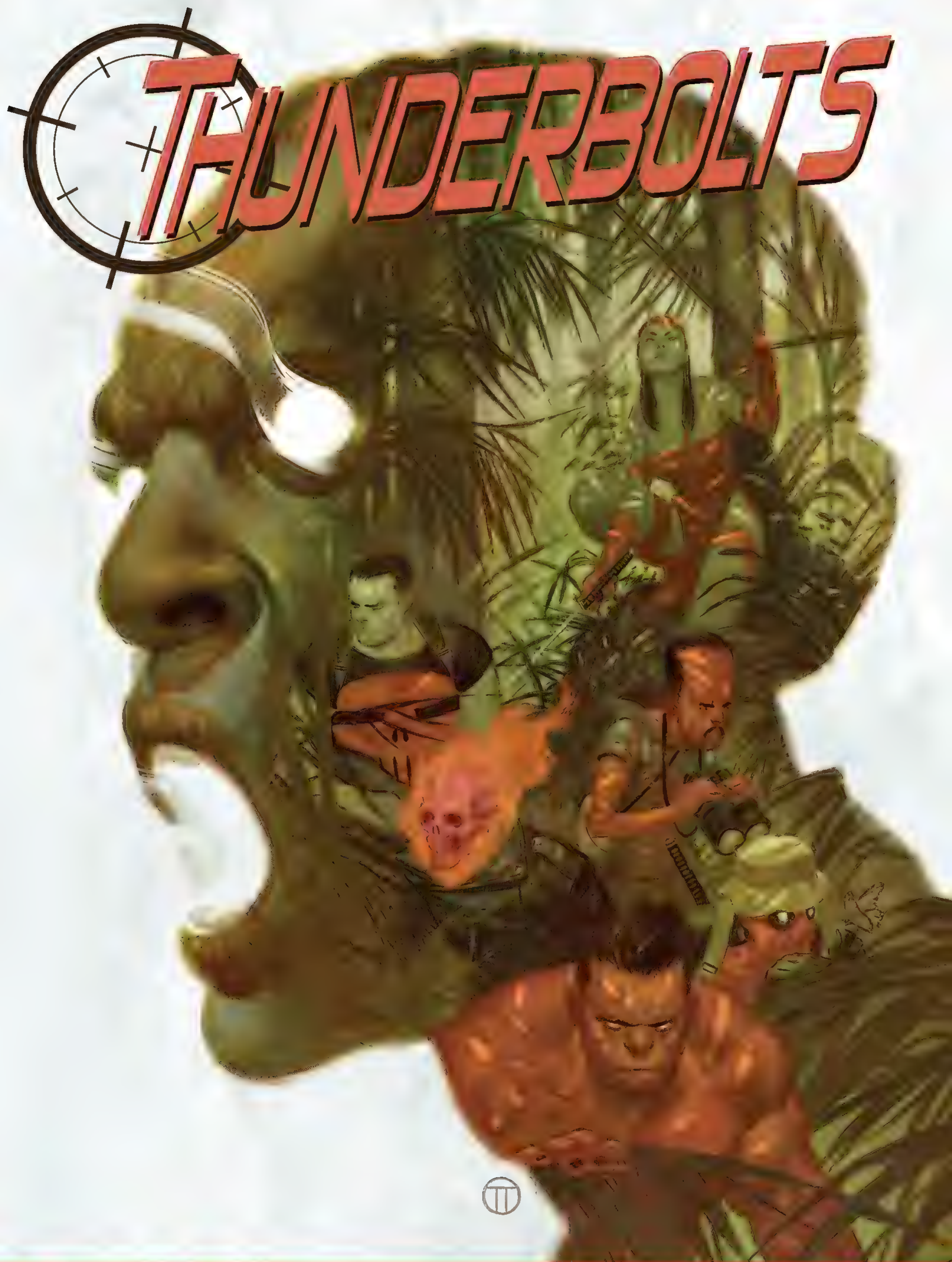
NO. IT
DOESN'T REALLY
DO THAT.

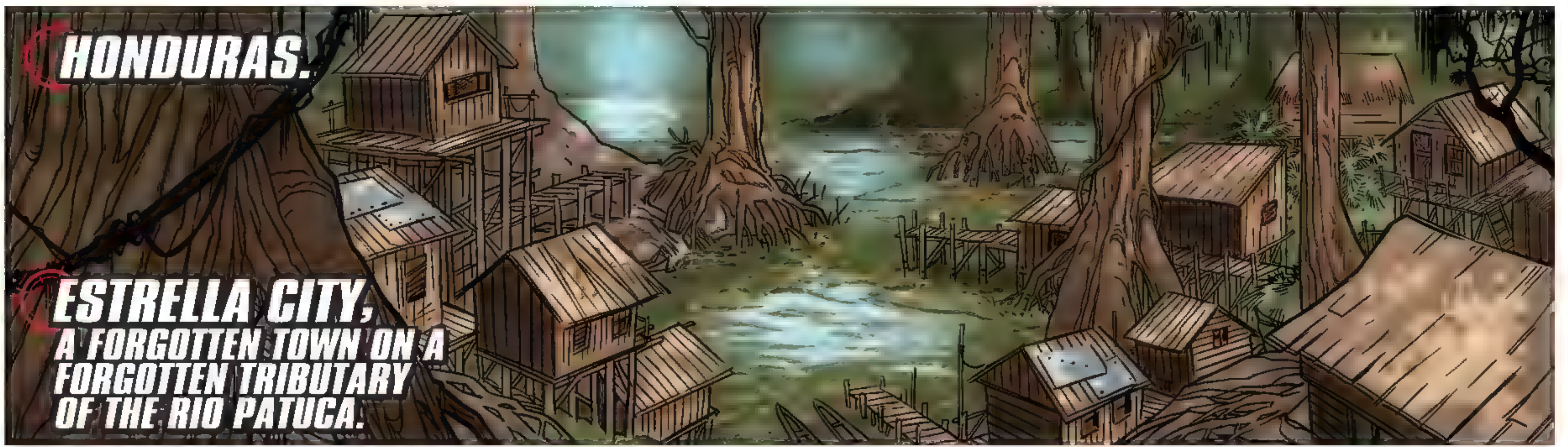
BUT
EVERYONE CAN
CHANGE.

TAKE
CARE, SIR.



END.





HONDURAS.

ESTRELLA CITY,
A FORGOTTEN TOWN ON A
FORGOTTEN TRIBUTARY
OF THE RIO PATUCA.



YOU AND I BOTH
KNOW WE'RE THE WORST
TWO PEOPLE IN THIS
PLACE, CORDOBA.

WHICH IS WHY
YOU'RE GOING
TO HELP ME.



THE WORST
TWO, ROSS? THAT'S
QUITE A STATEMENT,
CONSIDERING THE
CLIENTELE.

BUT I KNOW
YOU, AND YOU KNOW
ME, AND I THINK
PERHAPS YOU ARE
CORRECT.

I HAD HEARD
YOU HAD DIED--I AM
GLAD TO FIND YOU ALIVE.
YOU SEE, I AM FOND OF
TERRIBLE PEOPLE. THEY
OFTEN LIKE TO DO
INTERESTING THINGS.

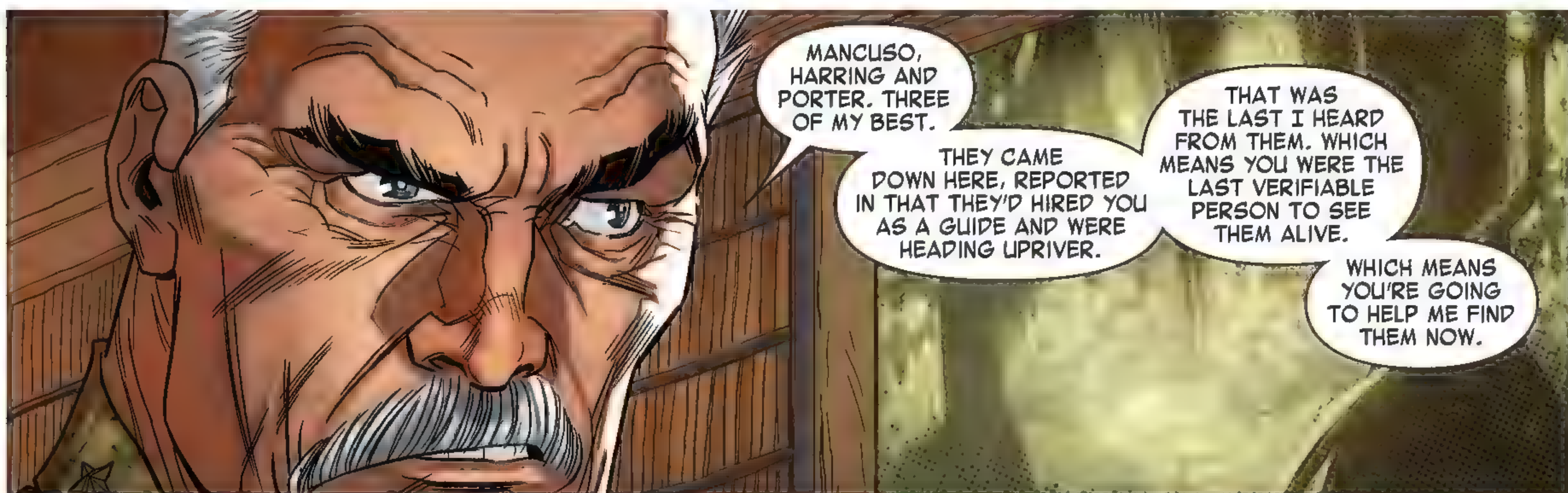
SO TELL ME
ABOUT YOUR
INTERESTING THING,
GENERAL, AND WE
SHALL SEE IF I
WILL HELP YOU.



YEARS AGO, I SENT A TEAM DOWN HERE. THEY WERE SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING.

LIKE SO MANY OTHERS BEFORE THEM AND SINCE. THIS IS A PLACE OF MYSTERIES--SOME SAY THE GREATEST MYSTERY.

NO. THESE WERE DIFFERENT. THEY WERE MY GUYS.



MANCUSO, HARRING AND PORTER. THREE OF MY BEST.

THEY CAME DOWN HERE, REPORTED IN THAT THEY'D HIRED YOU AS A GUIDE AND WERE HEADING UPRIVER.

THAT WAS THE LAST I HEARD FROM THEM. WHICH MEANS YOU WERE THE LAST VERIFIABLE PERSON TO SEE THEM ALIVE.

WHICH MEANS YOU'RE GOING TO HELP ME FIND THEM NOW.



SO LONG AGO, ROSS. AS I SAID, SO MANY MEN HAVE COME THROUGH HERE SEEKING THEIR FORTUNE.

PERHAPS THEY WERE SIMPLY SWALLOWED UP BY THE RIVER? IT IS A VERY DANGEROUS RIVER, AFTER ALL. NOT AN ORDINARY RIVER. NOT AT ALL.

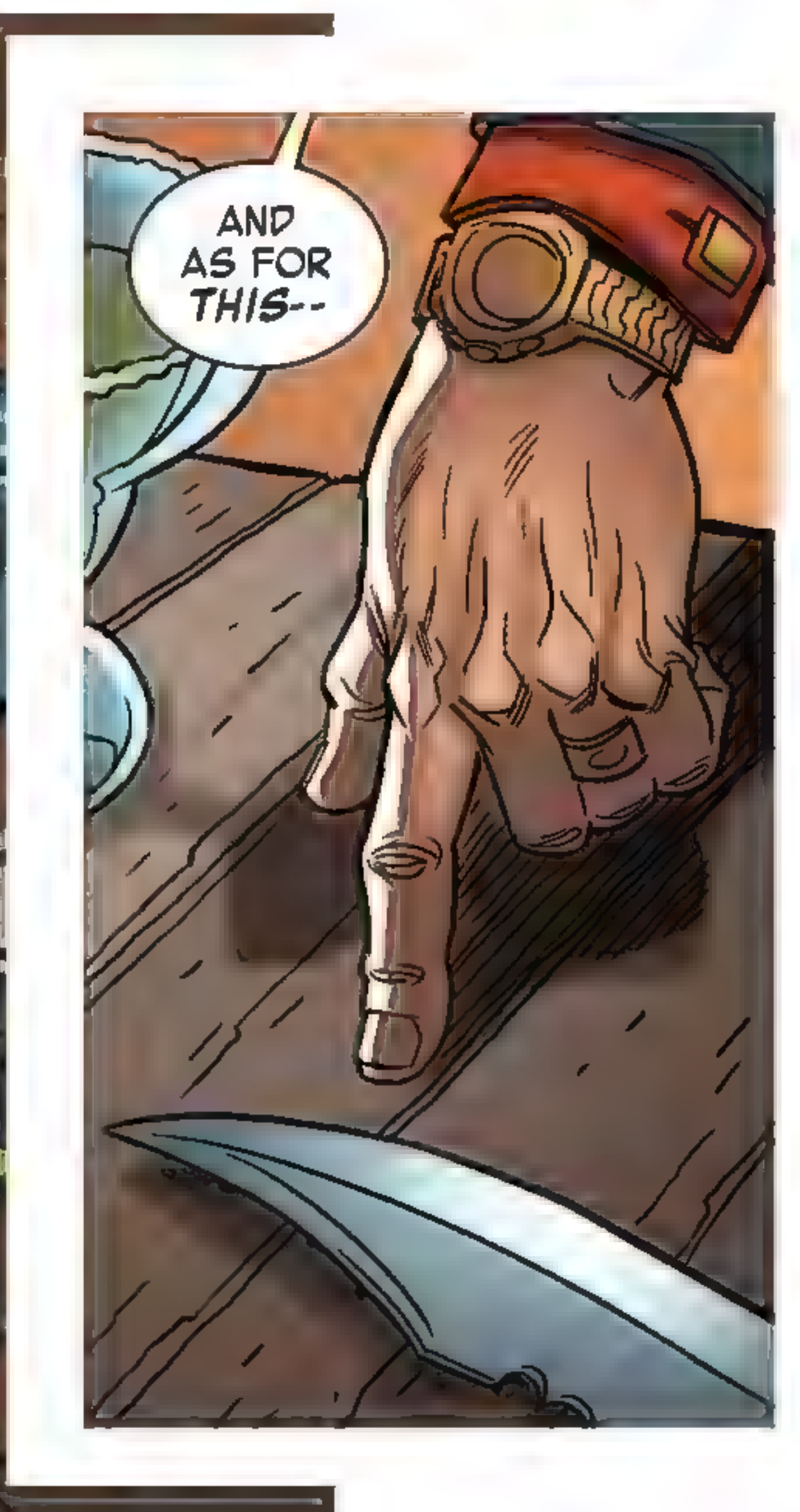
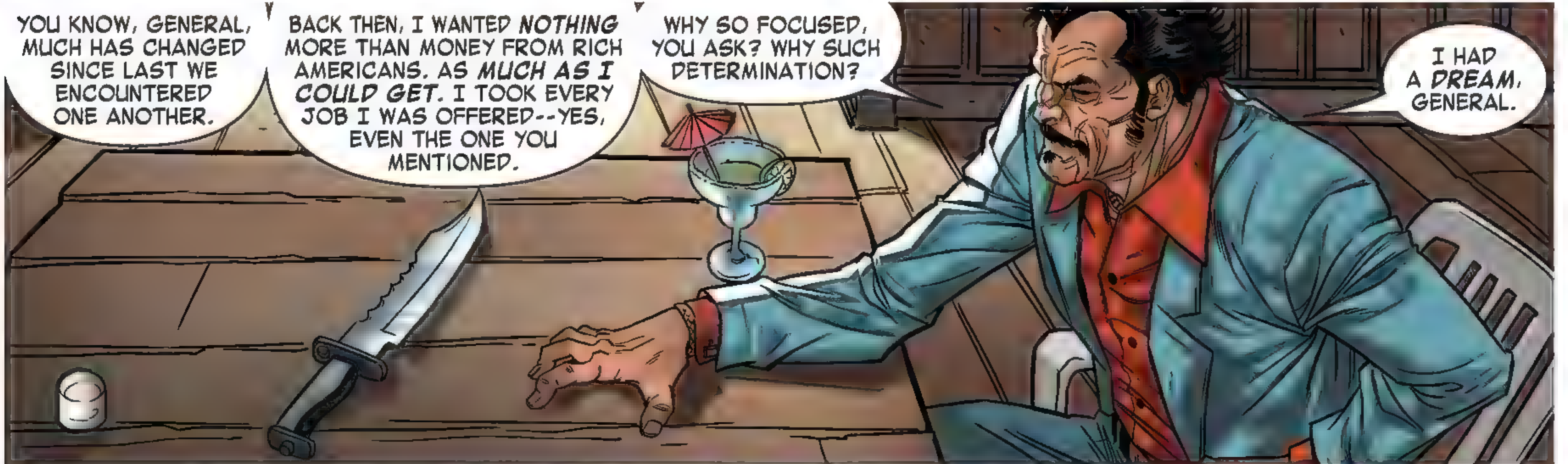
HOW CAN I POSSIBLY RECALL? IF YOUR MEN DIED, THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME. WHAT REASON WOULD I HAVE TO SALVE YOUR GUILTY CONSCIENCE?

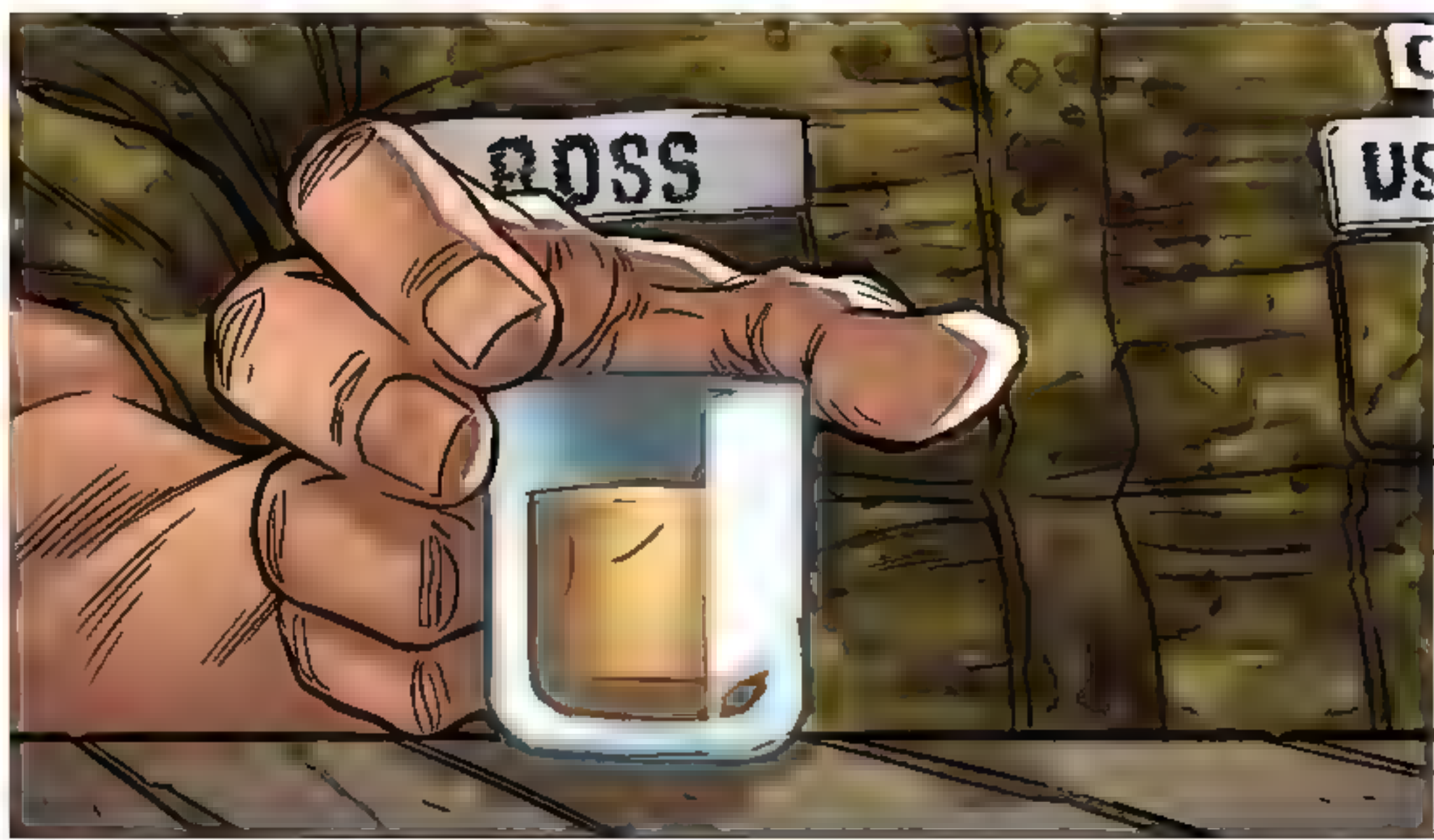
I HAVE HALF A MILLION REASONS FOR YOU, CORDOBA. AND ONE.

AMERICAN DOLLARS, NOT THAT TOILET PAPER YOU CALL CURRENCY DOWN HERE. TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO MY TEAM, SHOW ME WHERE YOU LAST SAW THEM, AND IT'S YOURS.

PERSUASIVE REASONS, IT IS TRUE.

BUT WHAT IS THE FINAL ONE?

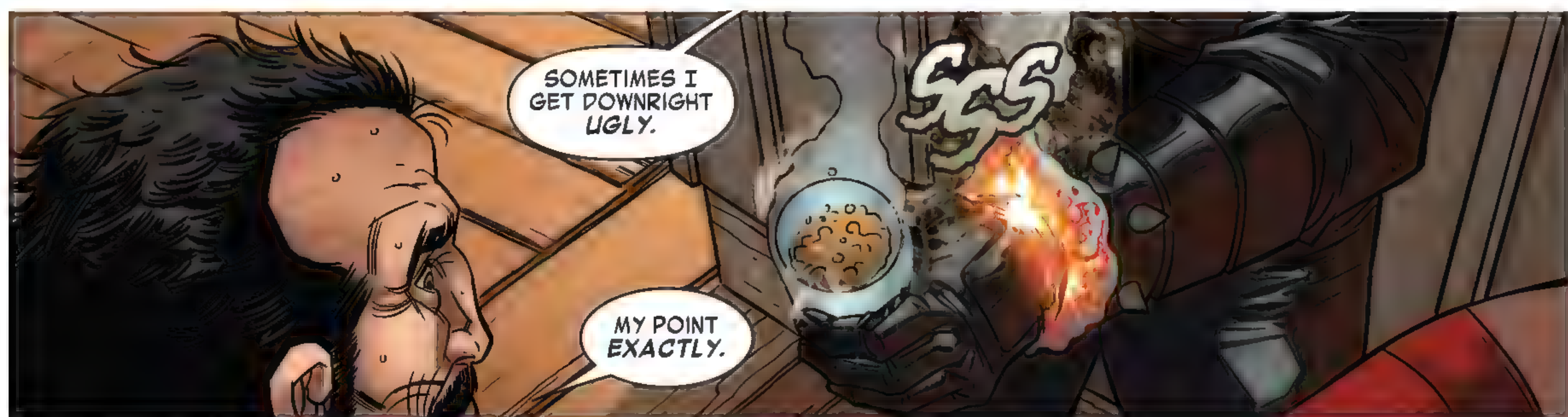






THE PRETTY BOY?
NO. YOU WOULDN'T
HAVE HIM WITH YOU UNLESS
HE IS MORE THAN HE
SEEMS. I DO NOT LIKE
UNKNOWN QUANTITIES.

PRETTY?
NOT ALWAYS.



SOMETIMES I
GET DOWNRIGHT
UGLY.

MY POINT
EXACTLY.

YOUR WOMAN--LOVELY, AND EFFECTIVE,
I'M SURE, BUT A WOMAN NONETHELESS. AND I
HAVE *SOME* HONOR LEFT. I WOULD NOT
SEND MY MEN TO FIGHT A WOMAN. IT
WOULD *SHAME* THEM.

THEY WOULDN'T HAVE TO
LIVE WITH THE SHAME FOR
VERY LONG. I PROMISE.

MMM.



AND THE OLDER
ONE...HE STINKS OF
DEATH, EVEN IN *THIS* PLACE.
IT HANGS OVER HIM LIKE A
CLOUD. I WOULD NOT PUT HIM
ON A KILLING PATH--HE
MIGHT NEVER STOP.



I DO NOT TRUST MEN IN MASKS. THIS ONE, NO.

I BET YOU'D TRUST ME EVEN LESS IF I TOOK IT OFF.

AND THIS MAN--THIS MAN I KNOW.

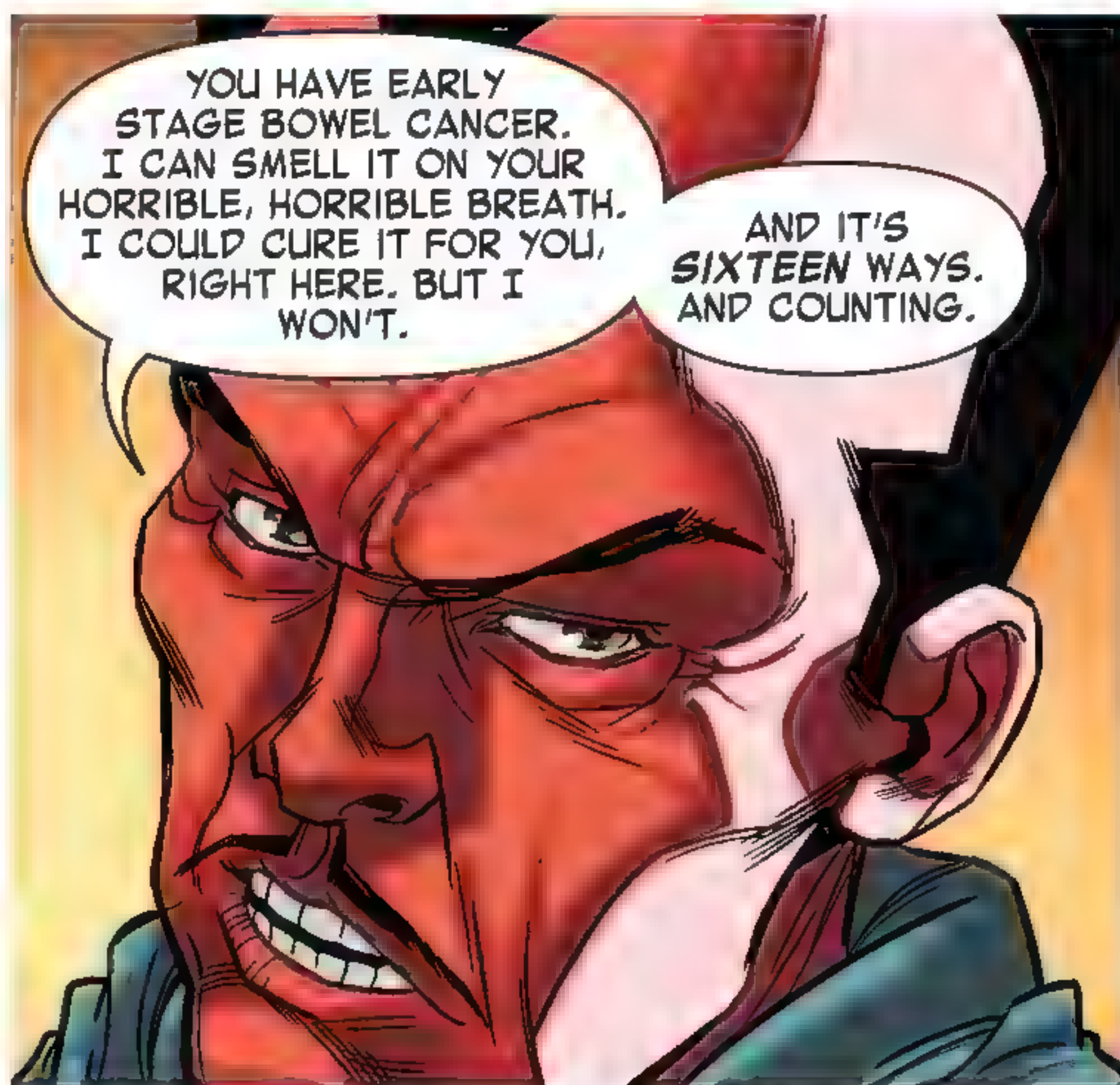
MR. STERNS, YOU HAVE CHANGED YOUR STRIPES SINCE THE LAST TIME WE HAD DEALINGS, BUT I SENSE THAT IS SIMPLY A *COSMETIC* ADJUSTMENT.

THE LEADER I KNEW WOULD ALREADY HAVE DEvised TEN WAYS TO KILL EVERYONE IN THIS TAVERN, AND WOULD BE MERE MOMENTS FROM DOING SO.



YOU HAVE EARLY STAGE BOWEL CANCER. I CAN SMELL IT ON YOUR HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE BREATH. I COULD CURE IT FOR YOU, RIGHT HERE. BUT I WON'T.

AND IT'S *SIXTEEN* WAYS. AND COUNTING.



A DELIGHTFUL BUNCH YOU'VE ASSEMBLED, ROSS. KILLERS, EVERY ONE. THAT MUCH IS CLEAR.

DOES IT *GALL* YOU? WHERE ARE YOUR CLEAN-CUT ALL-AMERICAN HEROES? AH, NO MATTER. YOU FIT BETTER HERE THAN AMONG ANY GROUP OF HONORABLE MEN.

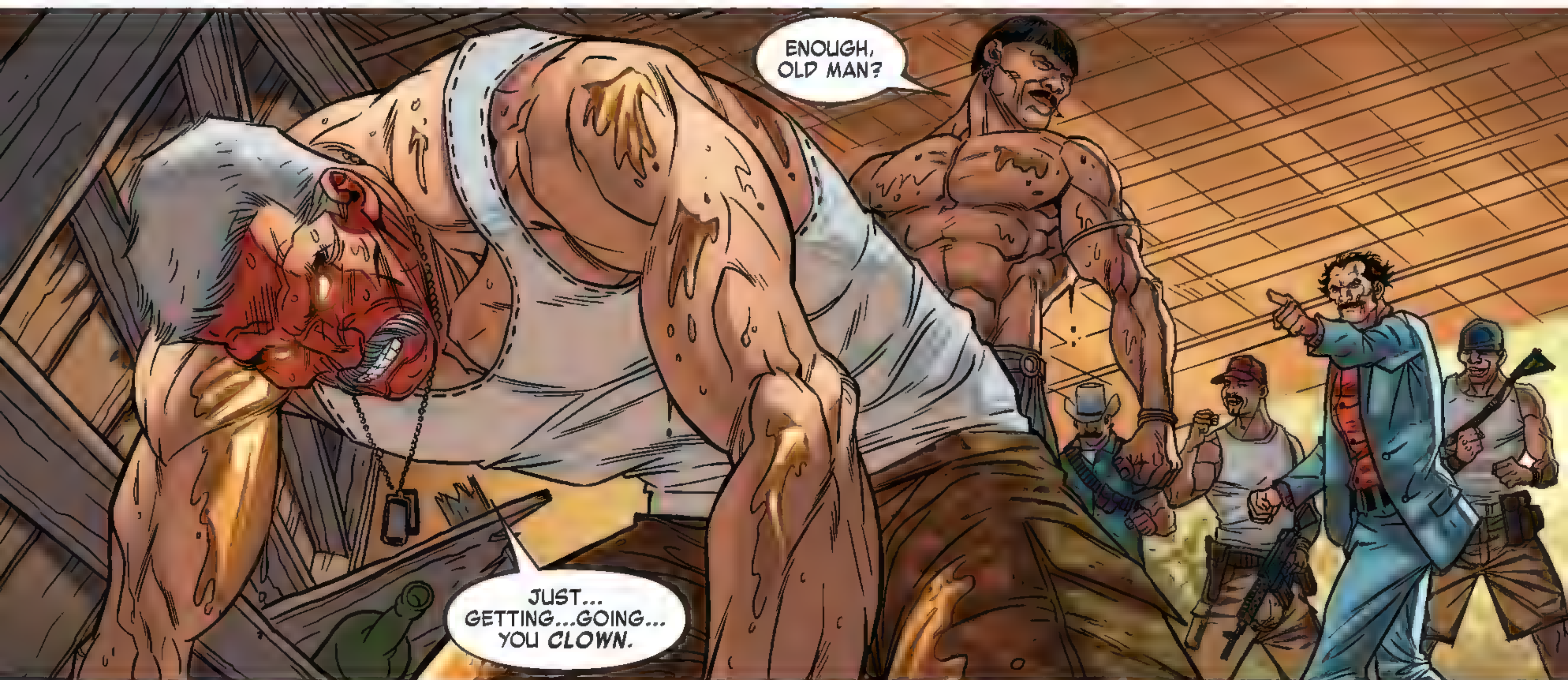
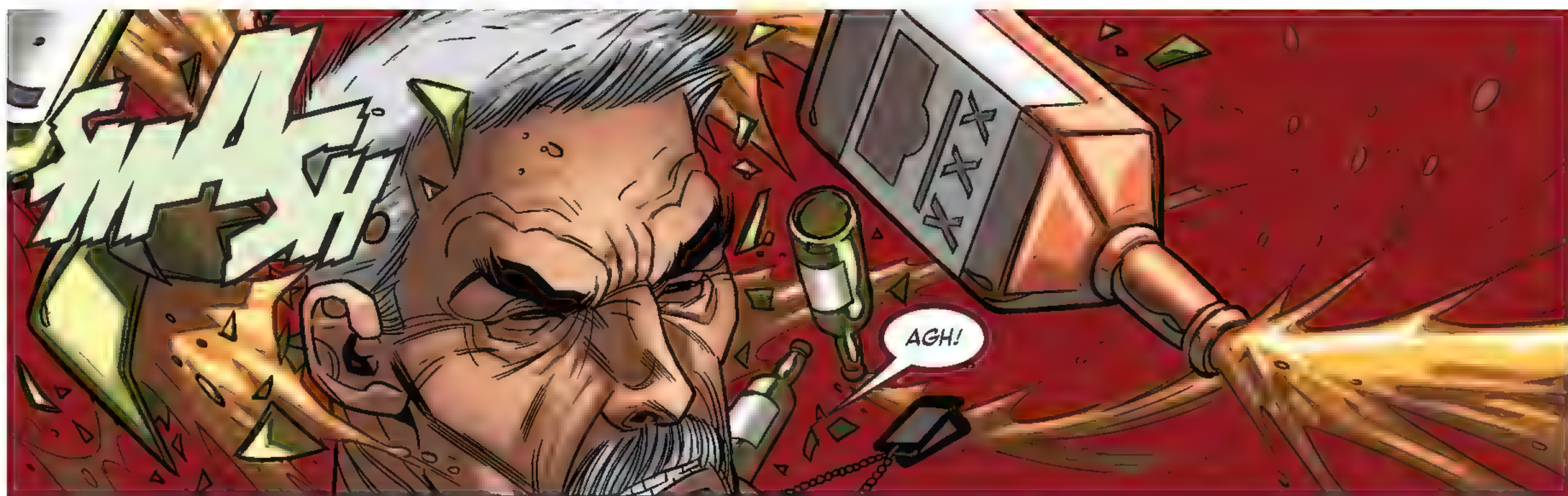
GET ON WITH IT, YOU PREENING ASS. PICK YOUR POISON.

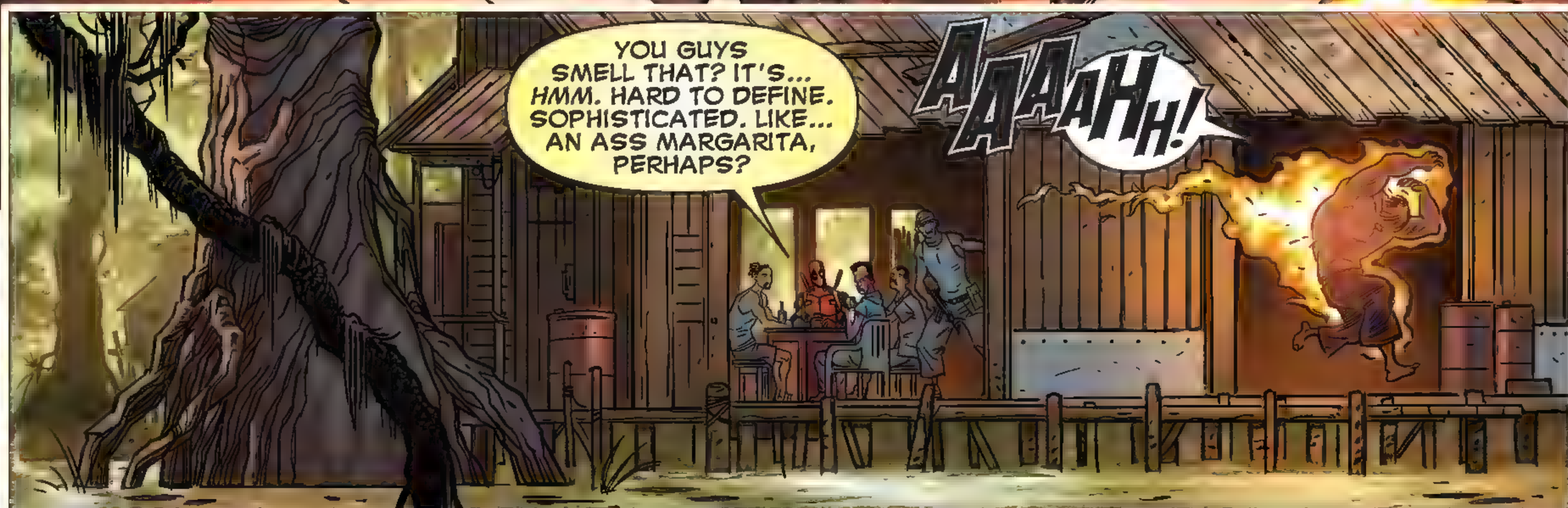
OH, GENERAL, YOU KNEW HOW THIS WOULD GO FROM THE BEGINNING. I PICK THE WORST PERSON IN HERE.

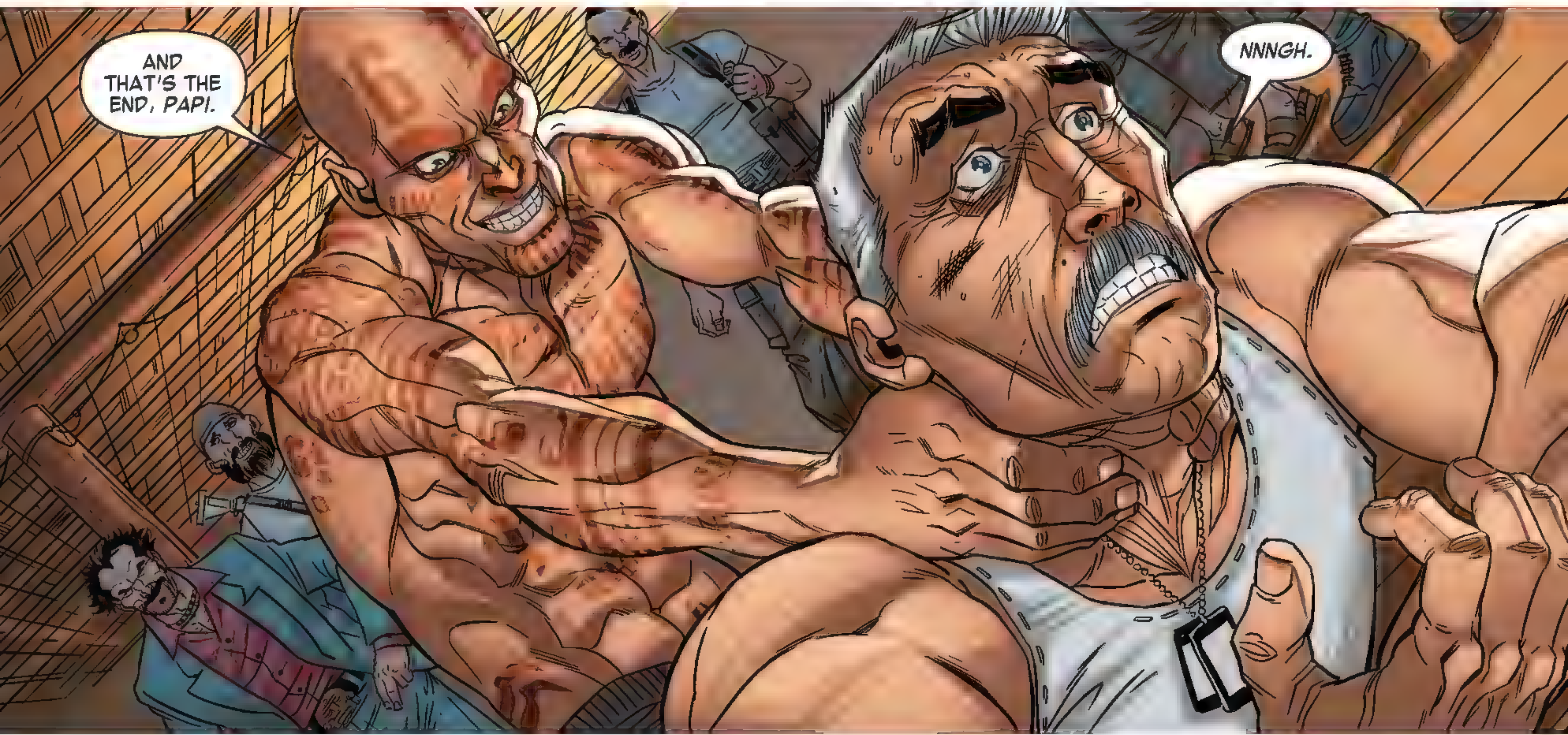
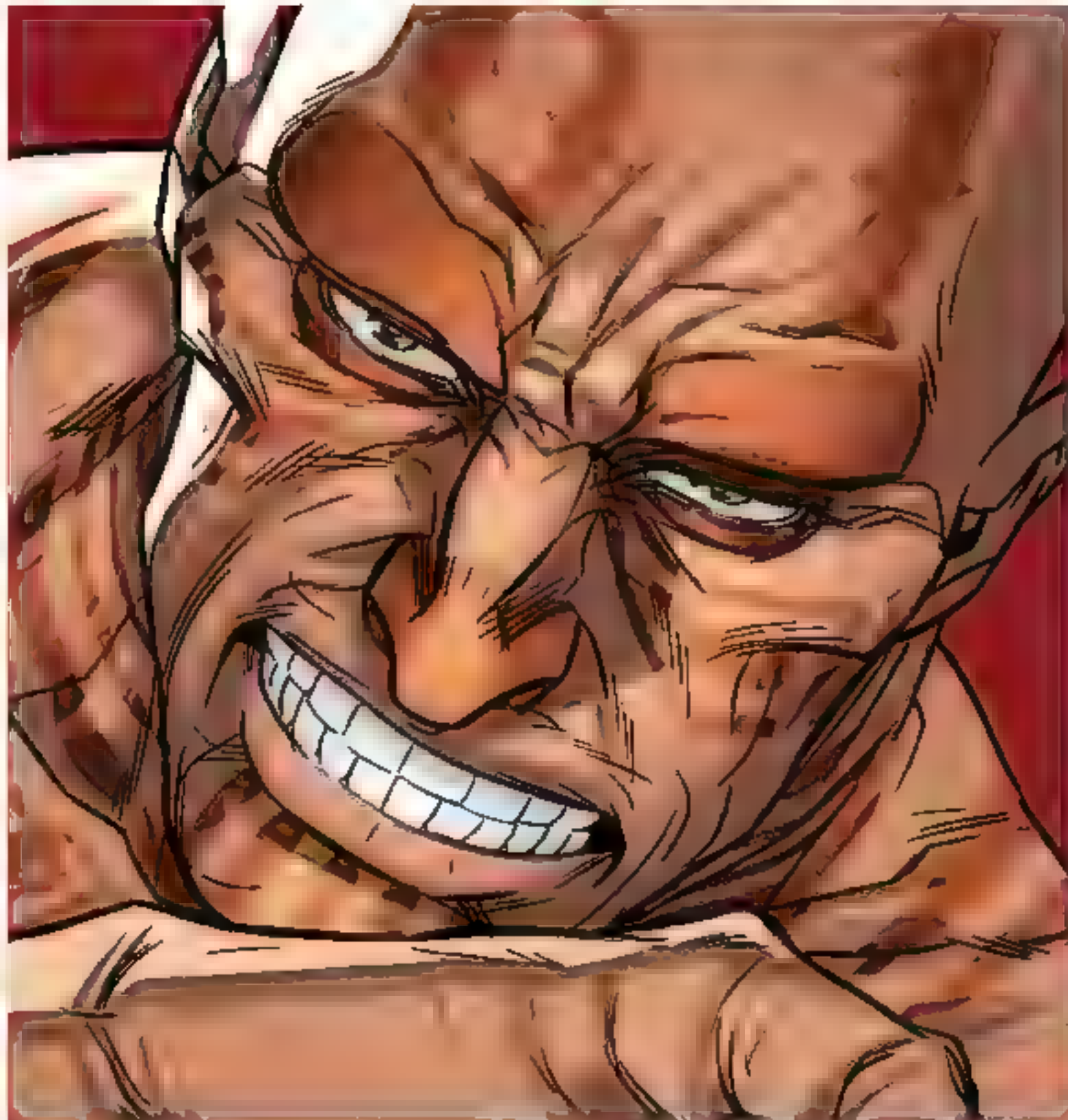


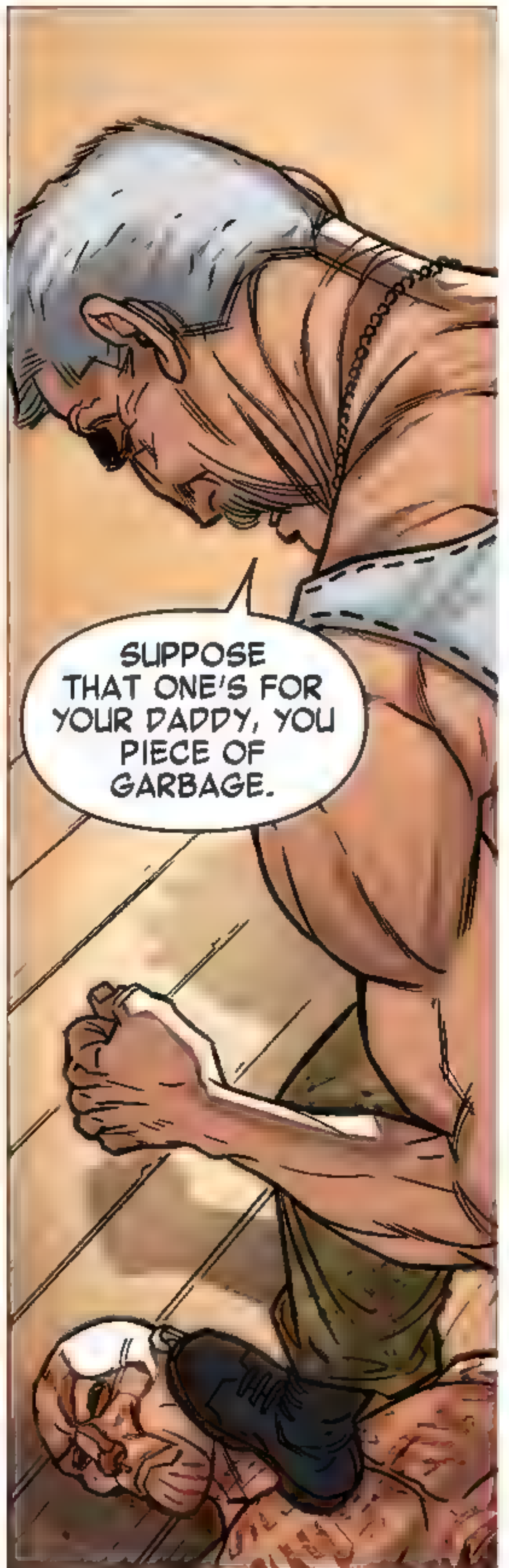
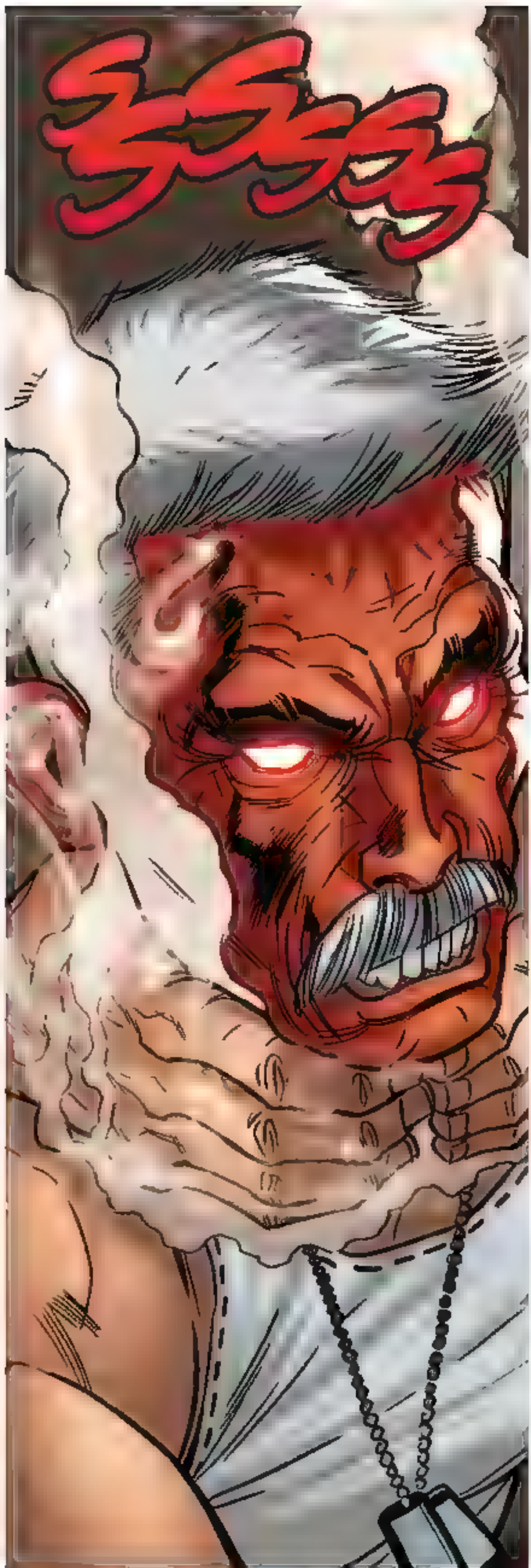
I PICK YOU.













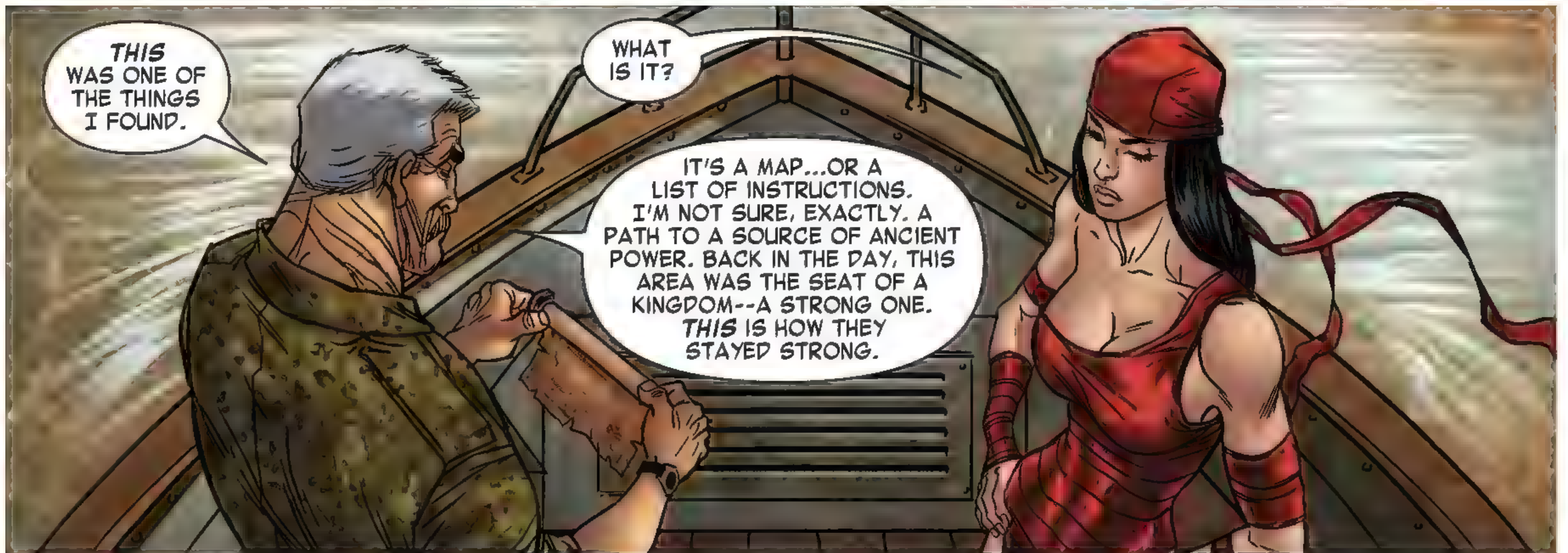
YEAH. RIVERS ARE JUST ONE LONG AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY. THE JUNGLE HIDES THE BAD GUYS. WE CAN'T SEE THEM, BUT THEY CAN SEE US. NOTHING MORE CONSPICUOUS THAN A BIG, LOUD BOAT ON A FLAT, WIDE RIVER.

PLENTY OF TIME TO GET AHEAD OF AND BEHIND US. SET UP A FOUR-POINT CROSSFIRE.

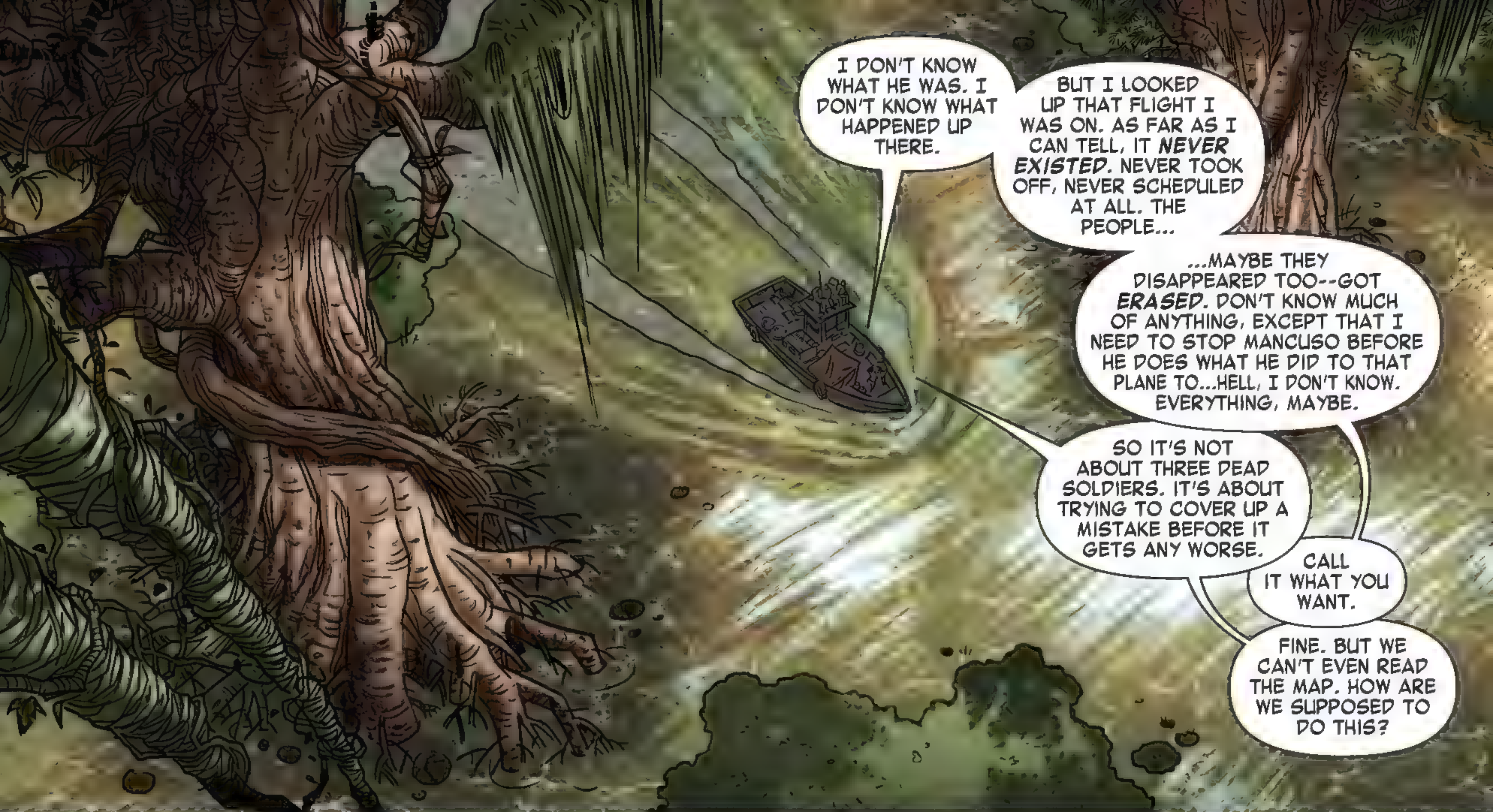
AND YOU LIKE THAT?

DIDN'T SAY I LIKED IT. SAID IT TAKES ME BACK.









I DON'T KNOW
WHAT HE WAS. I
DON'T KNOW WHAT
HAPPENED UP
THERE.

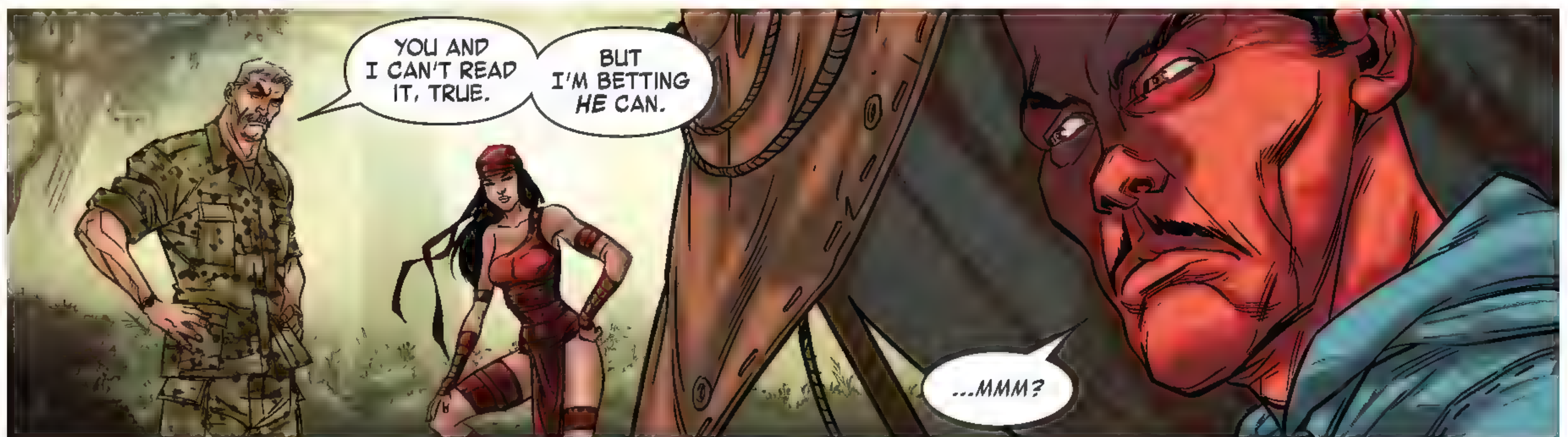
BUT I LOOKED
UP THAT FLIGHT I
WAS ON. AS FAR AS I
CAN TELL, IT **NEVER
EXISTED**. NEVER TOOK
OFF, NEVER SCHEDULED
AT ALL. THE
PEOPLE...

...MAYBE THEY
DISAPPEARED TOO--GOT
ERASED. DON'T KNOW MUCH
OF ANYTHING, EXCEPT THAT I
NEED TO STOP MANCUSO BEFORE
HE DOES WHAT HE DID TO THAT
PLANE TO...HELL, I DON'T KNOW.
EVERYTHING, MAYBE.

SO IT'S NOT
ABOUT THREE DEAD
SOLDIERS. IT'S ABOUT
TRYING TO COVER UP A
MISTAKE BEFORE IT
GETS ANY WORSE.

CALL
IT WHAT YOU
WANT.

FINE. BUT WE
CAN'T EVEN READ
THE MAP. HOW ARE
WE SUPPOSED TO
DO THIS?



YOU AND
I CAN'T READ
IT, TRUE.

BUT
I'M BETTING
HE CAN.

...MMM?



GET OVER
HERE, STERNS.
I NEED YOU.

I HAVE TO
STAY OUT OF
THIS TROPICAL LIV.
I COULD GET A
SUNBURN.

WHO
COULD POSSIBLY
TELL?

NOW, STERNS. IF
YOU CAN'T MAKE YOURSELF
USEFUL, YOU'RE JUST DEAD
WEIGHT. DEAD WEIGHT GOES
OVERBOARD. AND THEN
IT'S JUST DEAD.



WHAT DO YOU
MAKE OF THIS? CAN
YOU READ IT?

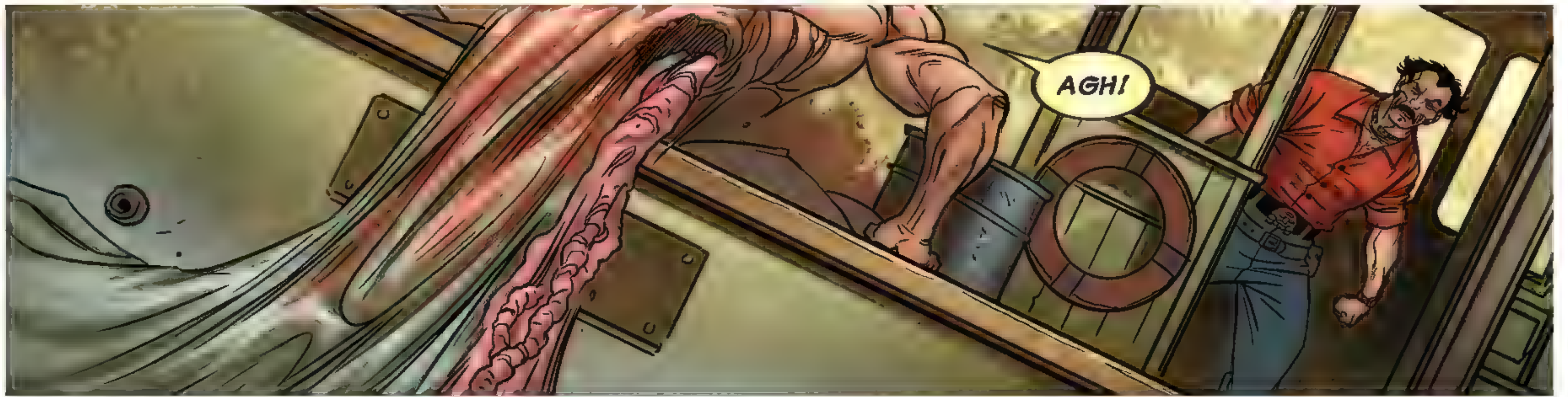
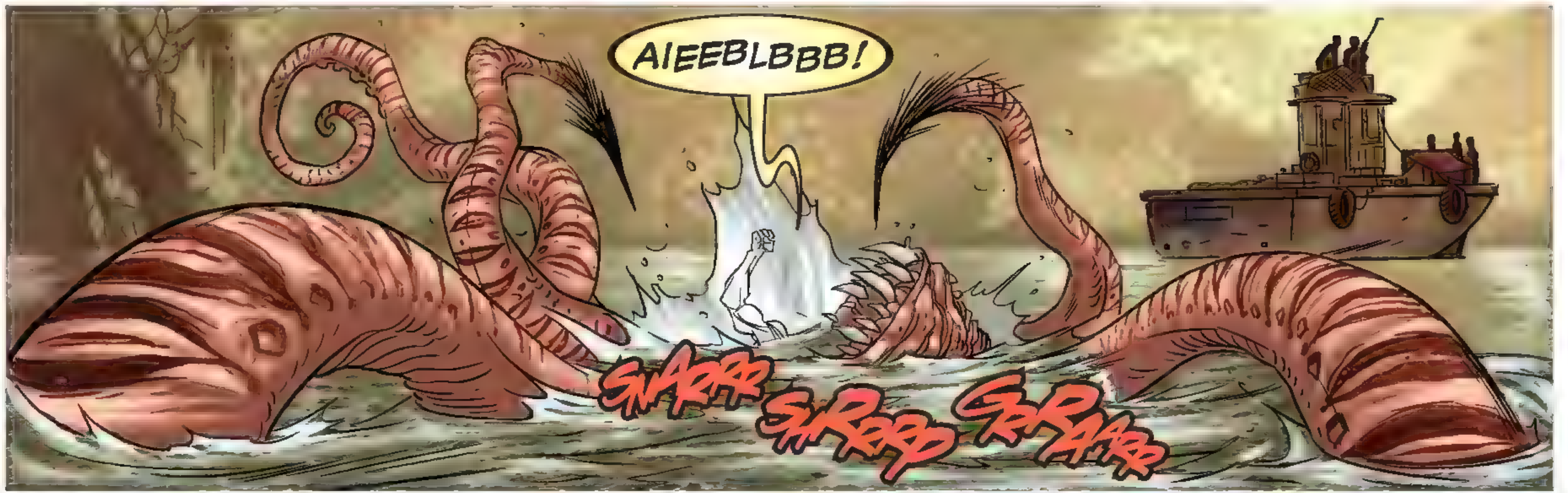
I BELIEVE
SO. THIS...THIS IS
DEVIANT SCRIPT.

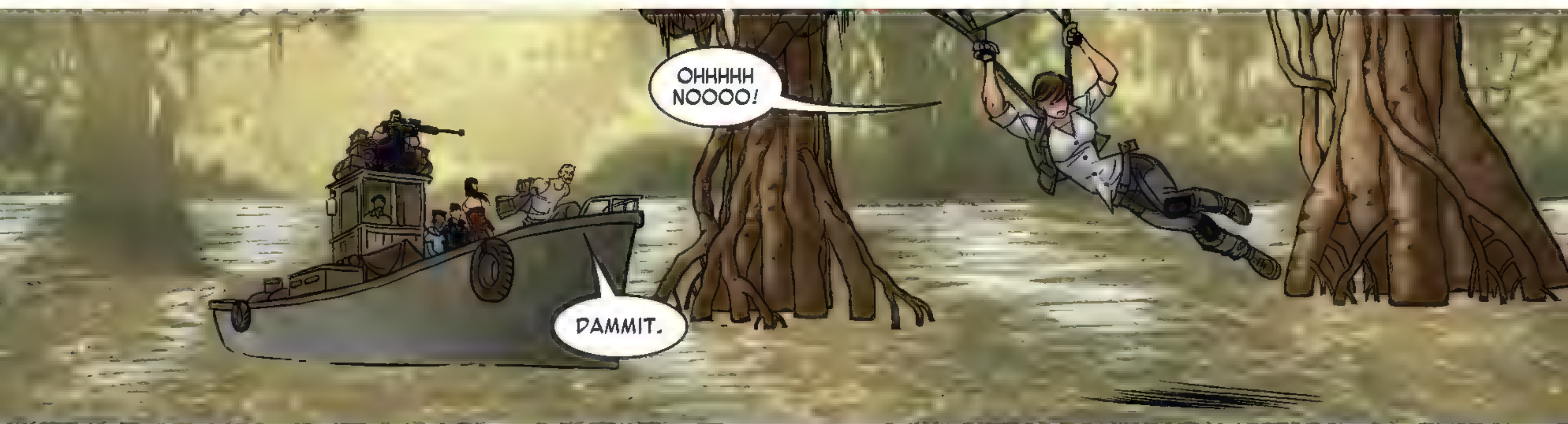
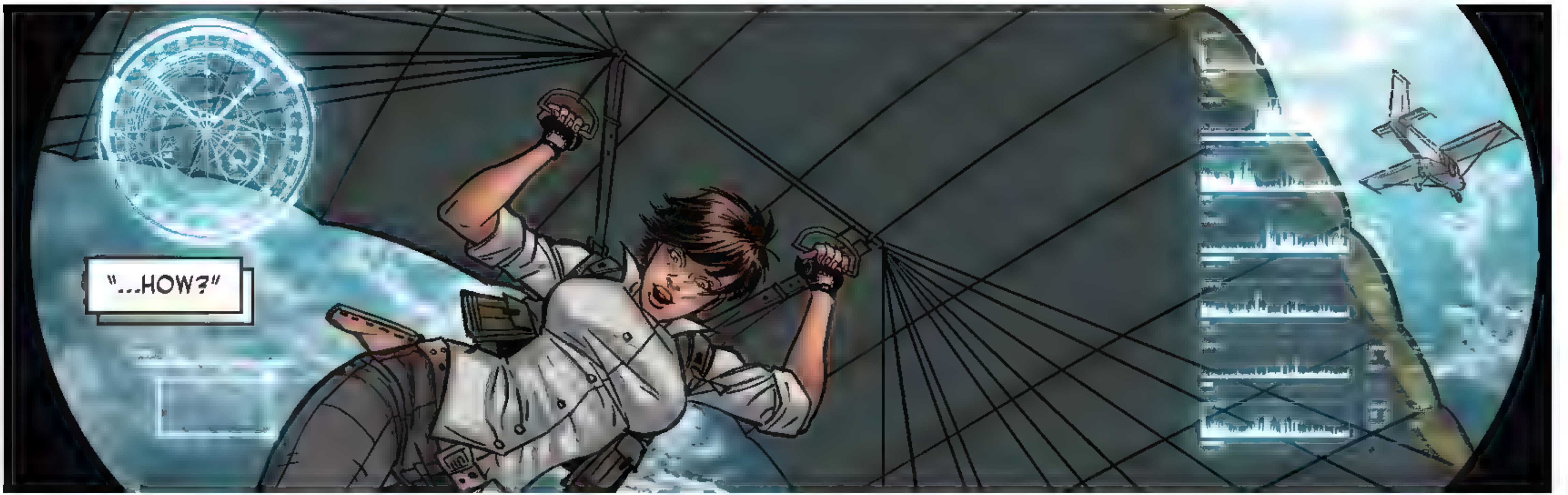
DEVIANT?
YOU MEAN
OBSCENE?

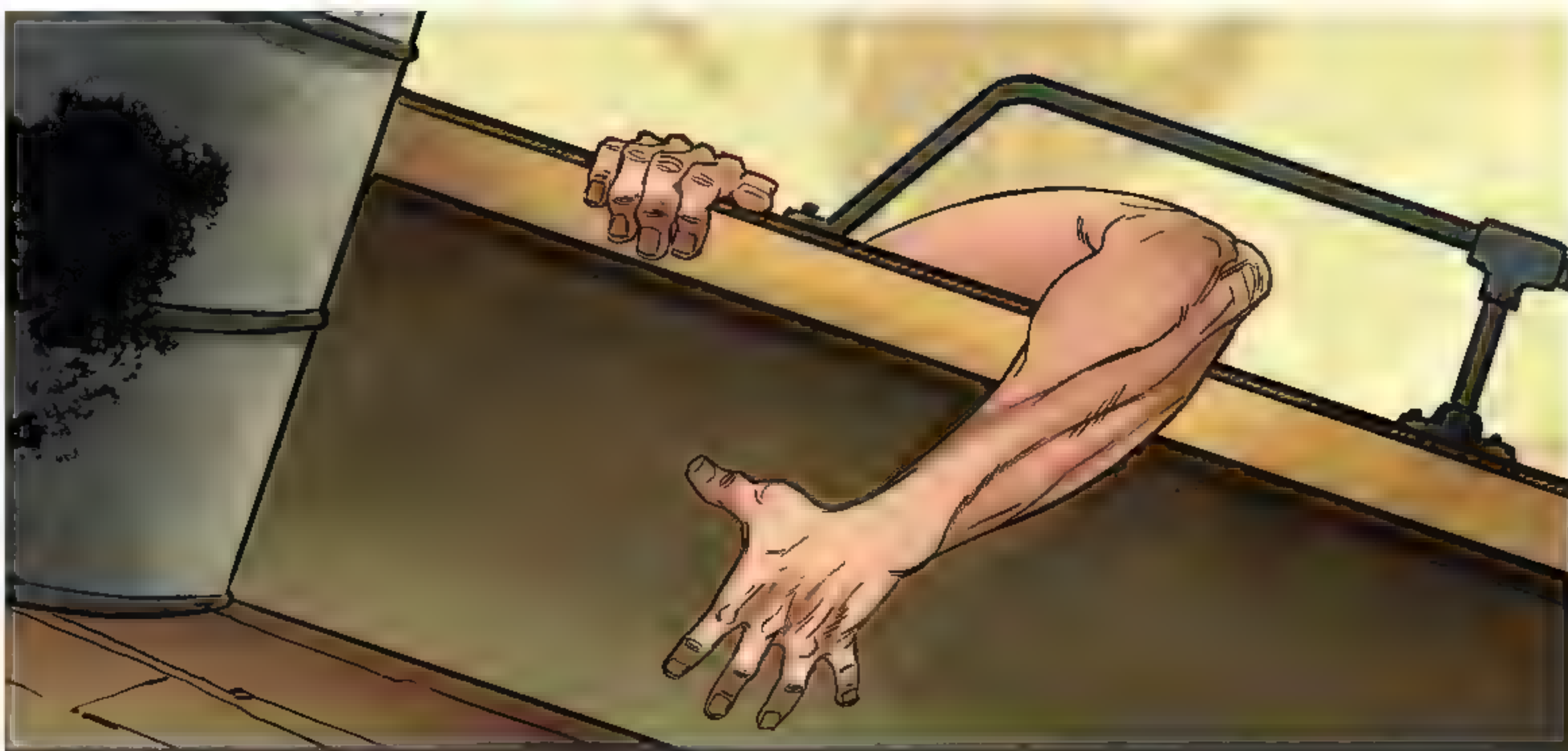
NO. AND I OBJECT
TO THE CONCEPT OF OBSCENITY
ON A PHILOSOPHICAL LEVEL IN ANY
CASE. THE DEVIANTS WERE AN ANCIENT
RACE. VERY STRANGE. CREATED BY
THE CELESTIALS AN UNIMAGINABLY
LONG TIME AGO.

THIS...IS
SOMETHING, THADDEUS.
VERY INTERESTING
INDEED.











CONTINUED.

THUNDERBOLTS

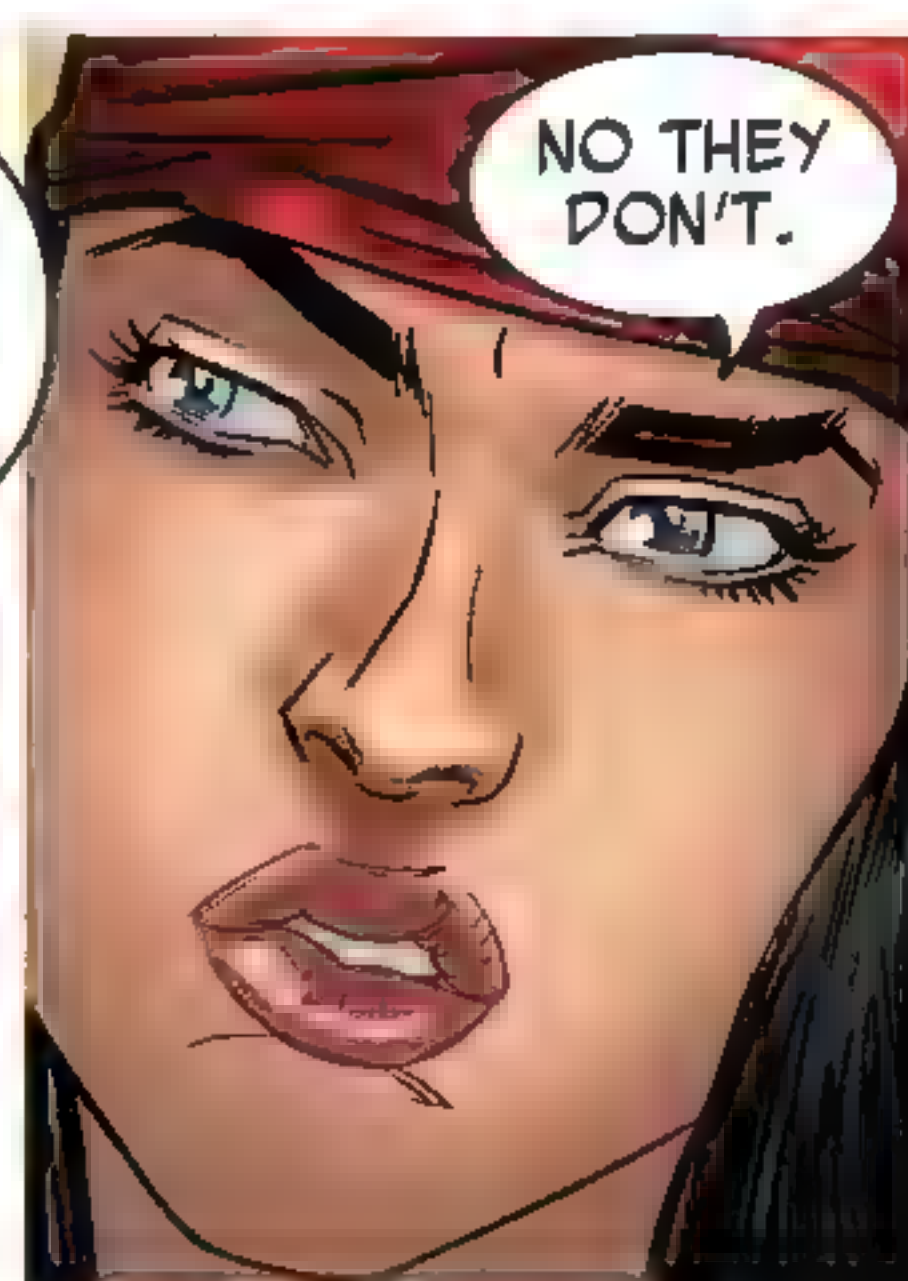
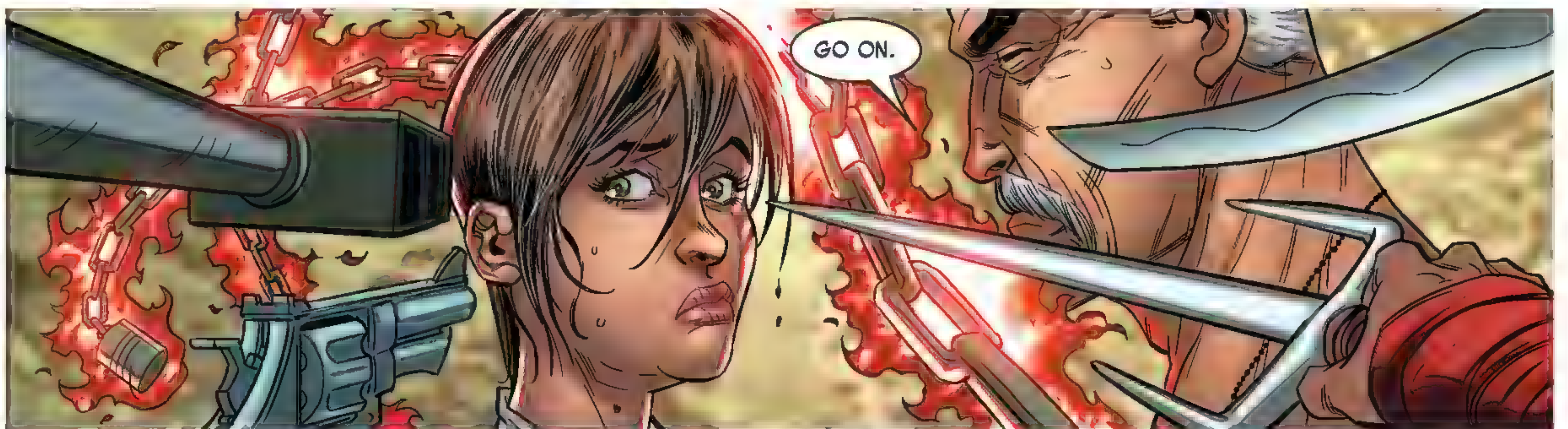


Israel
Silva

ALL-NEW
**MARVEL
NOW!**

SOULE • DIAZ • SILVA

025





YOU CAME **BACK**, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, AND YOU DIDN'T **CALL** ME?

WAS I **SUPPOSED** TO?

DAMN RIGHT! ROSS, I'M THE PERSON WHO TOLD YOU WHATEVER'S OUT HERE IS OUT HERE IN THE **FIRST** PLACE. WE HAD A **DEAL**.

I GAVE YOU MY RESEARCH IN EXCHANGE FOR A CHANCE TO STUDY THE ARTIFACT ONCE YOUR TEAM RETRIEVED IT.



I SHARED EVERYTHING I HAD WITH YOU...

EVERYTHING.

AND THEN YOU JUST **DISAPPEARED**. WORD WAS YOU WERE **DEAD**.



YOU DIDN'T SEEM THAT ANNOYED TO SEE ME, IF THAT KISS WAS ANY INDICATION.

THAT WAS JUST TO **DISTRACT** YOU SO I COULD PULL THE GUN. DON'T THINK I ENJOYED IT.

COULD'VE FOOLED ME.

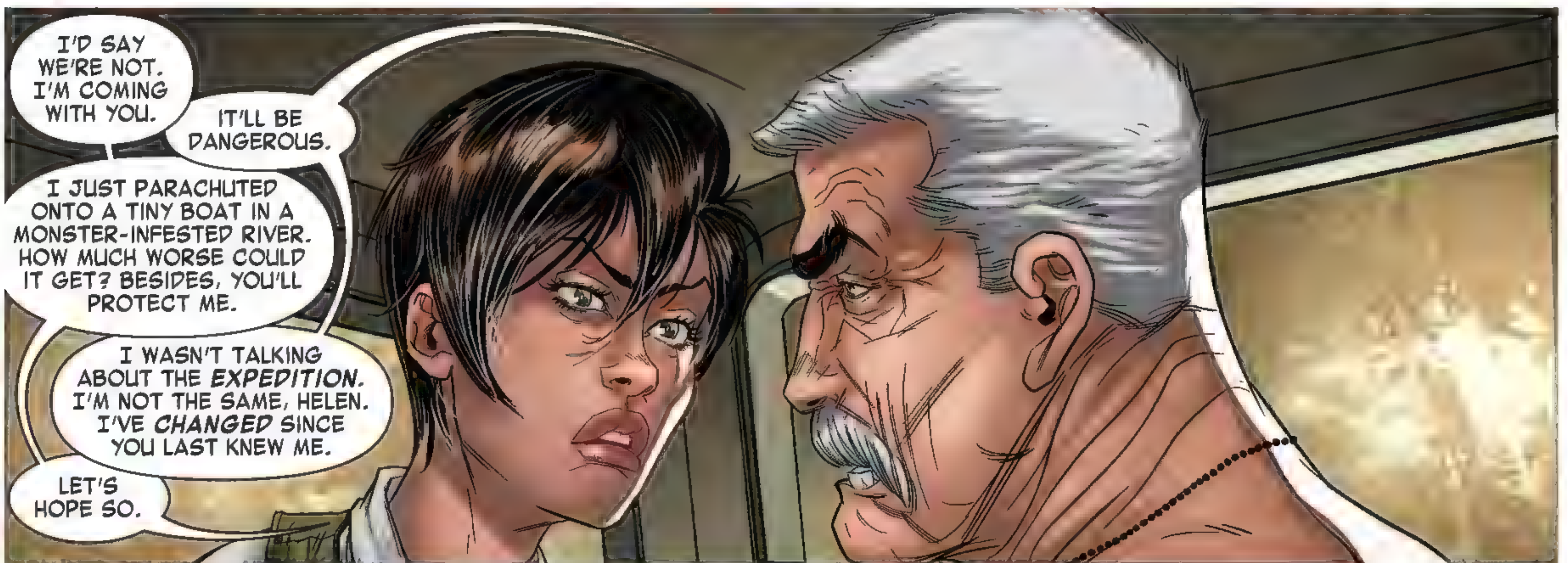
APPARENTLY, I DID. WOULDN'T BE THE FIRST TIME.



WHATEVER. LISTEN, HELEN, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU--I GUESS-- BUT WE NEVER **FOUND** ANYTHING LAST TIME. MY ENTIRE **TEAM** DISAPPEARED. I'M HERE TO TRY TO FIND **THEM**, NOT YOUR PRECIOUS ARTIFACT.

I DON'T OWE YOU A THING. AND EVEN IF I DID, I JUST PULLED YOUR SKINNY ASS OUT OF THAT RIVER BEFORE YOU WERE **EATEN ALIVE**.

I'D SAY WE'RE **SQUARE**.



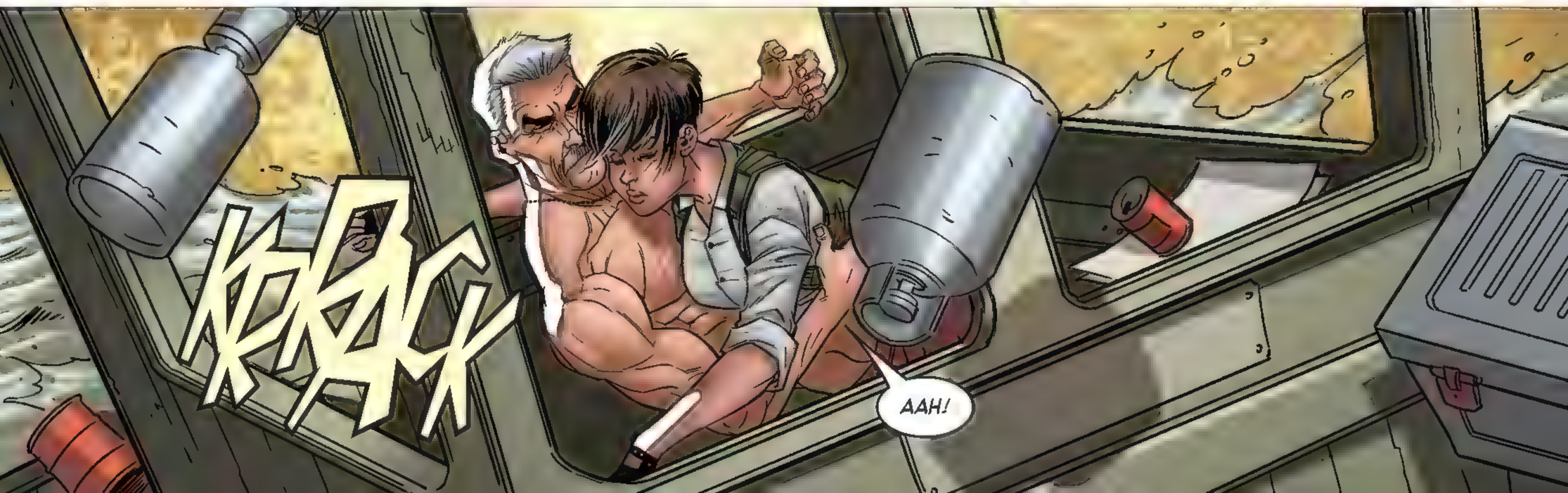
I'D SAY WE'RE NOT. I'M COMING WITH YOU.

IT'LL BE DANGEROUS.

I JUST PARACHUTED ONTO A TINY BOAT IN A MONSTER-INFESTED RIVER. HOW MUCH WORSE COULD IT GET? BESIDES, YOU'LL PROTECT ME.

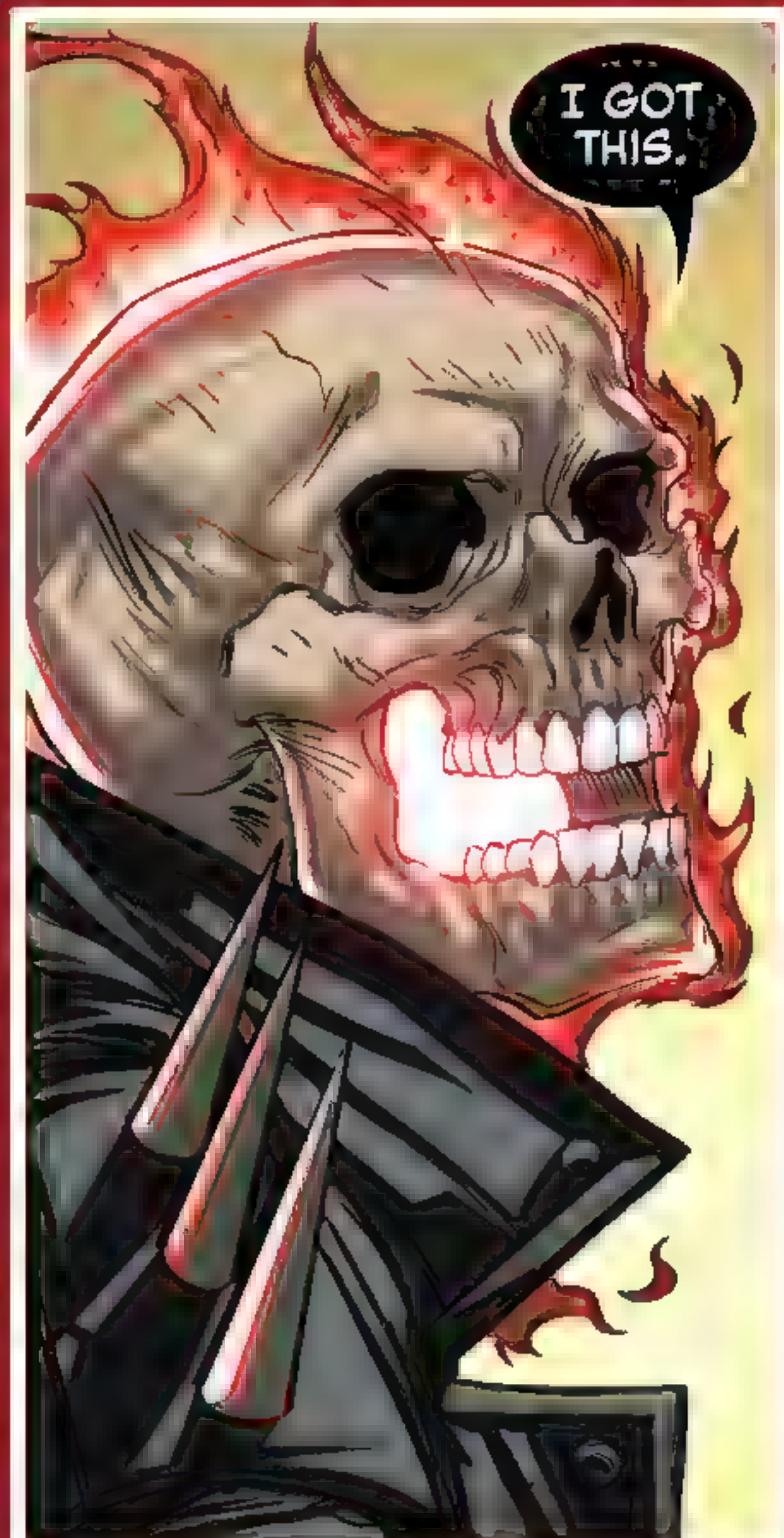
I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT THE **EXPEDITION**. I'M NOT THE SAME, HELEN. I'VE **CHANGED** SINCE YOU LAST KNEW ME.

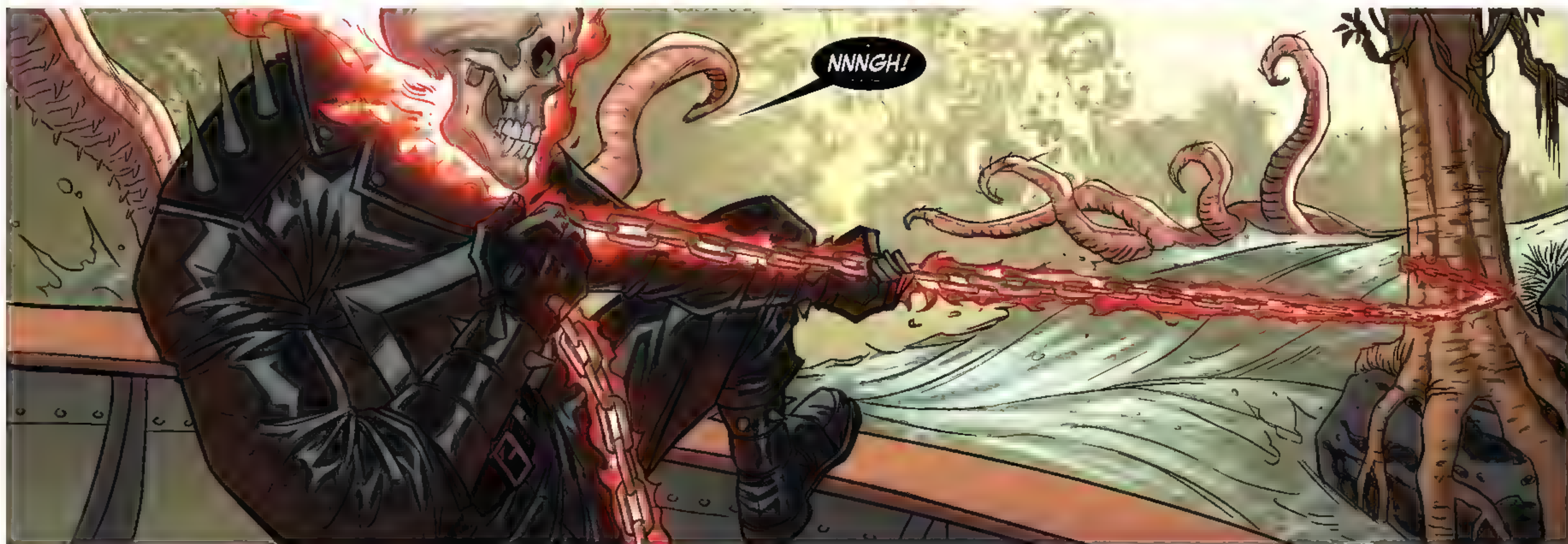
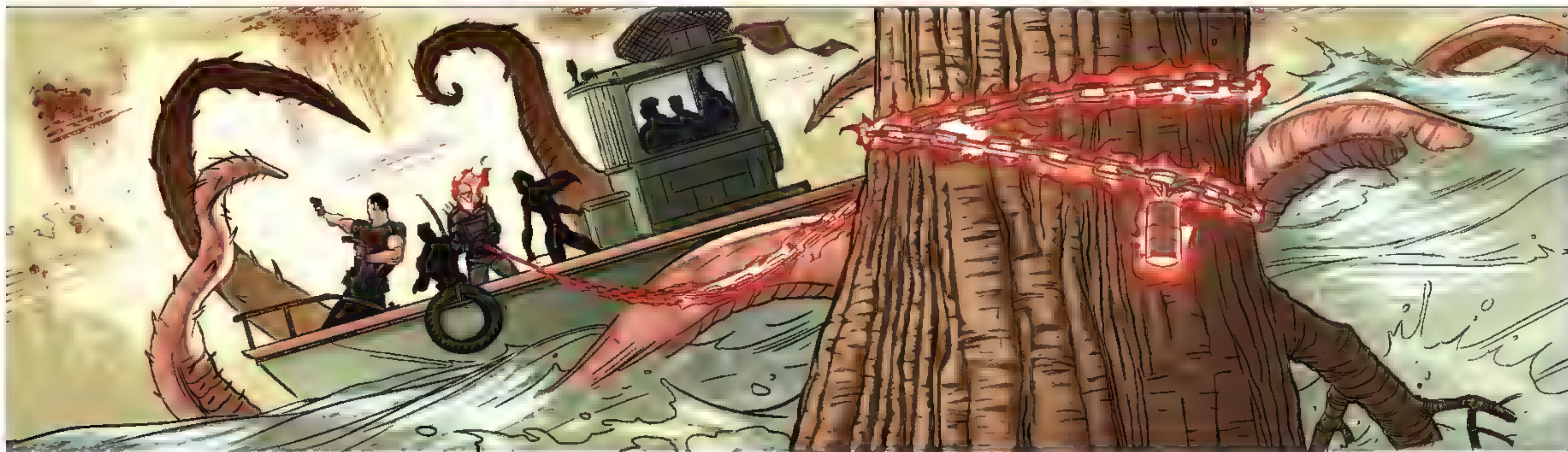
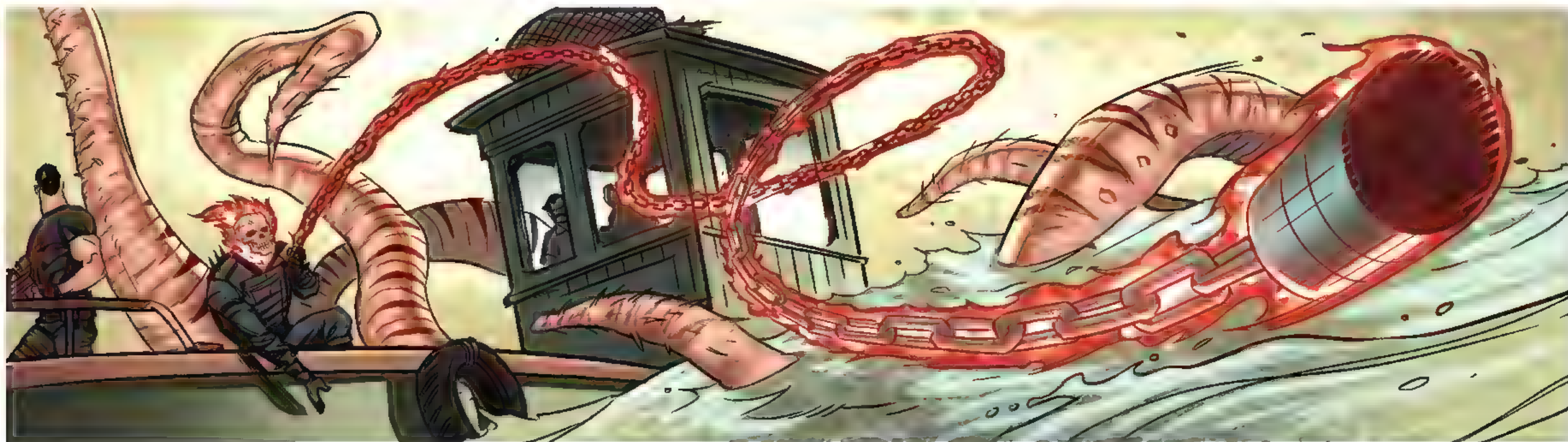
LET'S HOPE SO.

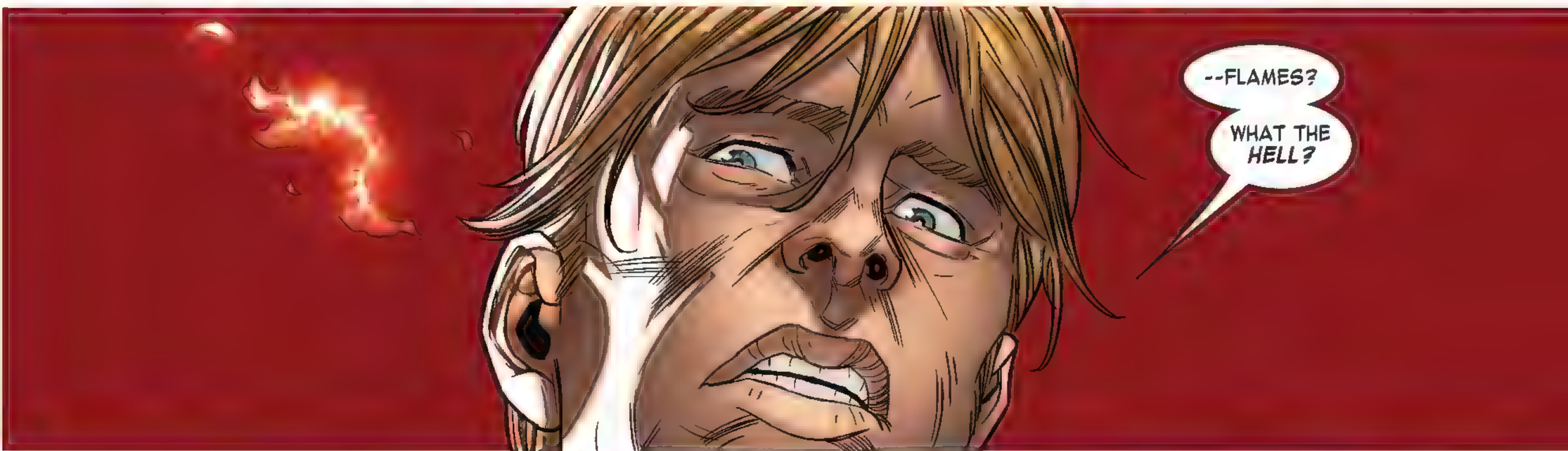


KRAK

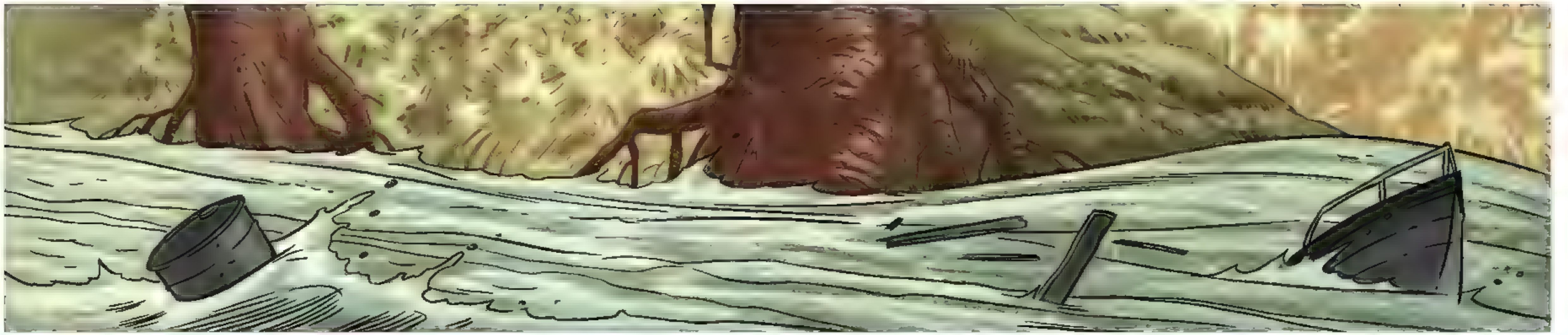
AAH!









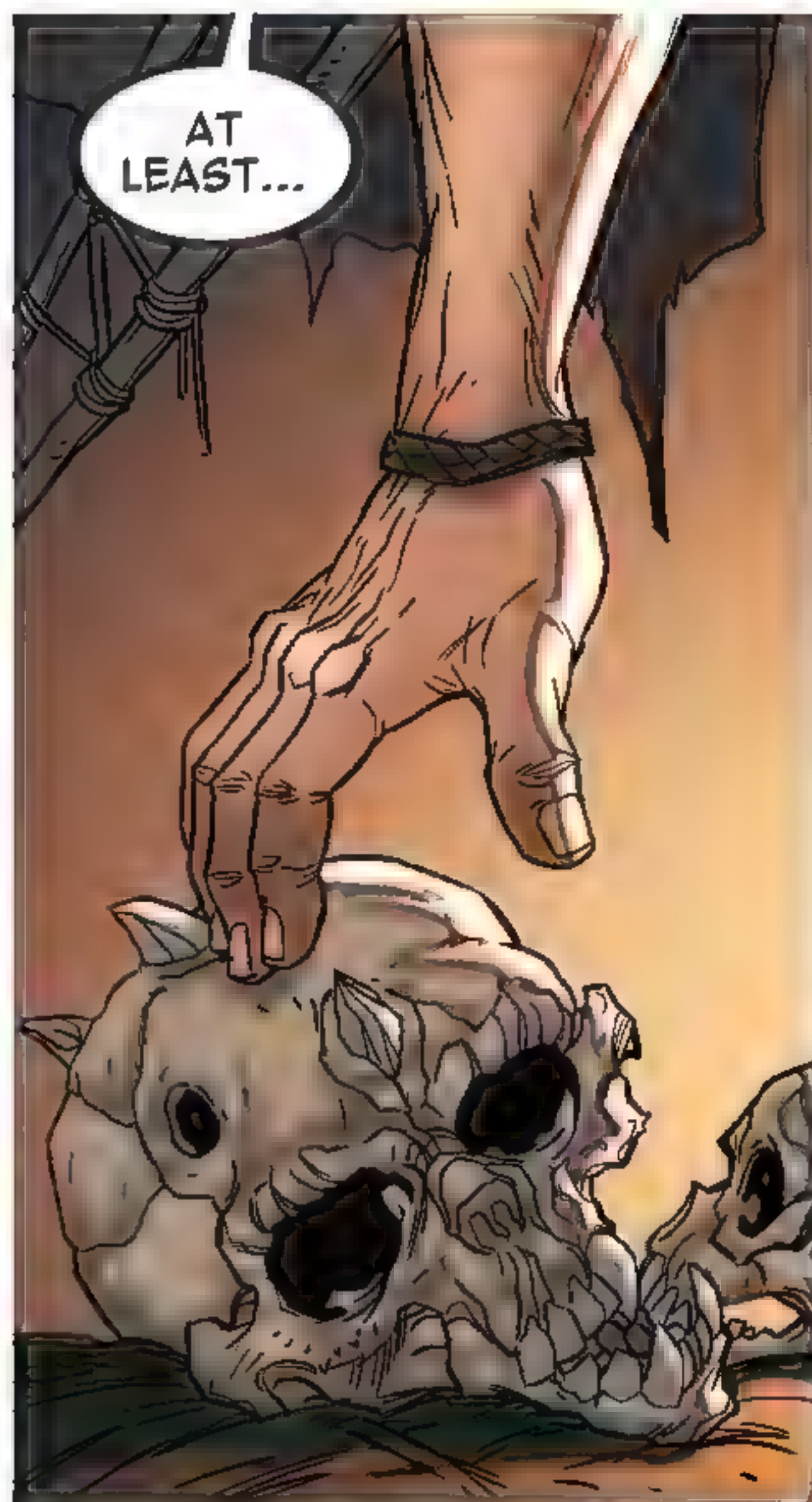




THIS IS WHERE
I LEFT YOUR MEN.
THEY MOVED ON, I
RETURNED ALONE.
AND THAT, ROSS,
IS THAT.

WAS
IT DESERTED,
THEN?

NOT AT ALL.
A STRANGE, CHEERFUL
TRIBE LIVED HERE. THE
VILLAGE WAS FULL
OF LIFE.



AT
LEAST...



...UNTIL YOUR MEN ARRIVED.
LOOKS LIKE EVERYONE IN
THIS VILLAGE WAS
EXECUTED, GENERAL.

YOU HAVE NO
PROOF MY MEN HAD
ANYTHING TO DO
WITH THAT.

NO? NO ONE FROM
HERE WOULD EVER
ATTACK THESE
PEOPLE. WE KNOW
THAT THIS IS A
STRANGE, SACRED
PLACE.

LET
ME SEE
THAT.



THE MORPHOLOGY
HERE IS **BIZARRE**.
THIS PERSON WOULD
HAVE LOOKED LIKE...
WELL, NOT LIKE **US**.

I'M
SORRY.



LIKE I SAID--
A **STRANGE** PLACE.
YOU THINK EVERY
RIVER IS FULL OF
MONSTERS? NO.

IT CHANGED
THESE PEOPLE,
AND IT WILL CHANGE
ALL OF **YOU** AS
WELL. STUPID
AMERICANOS.

YEAH,
SERIOUSLY.

I'M
CANADIAN.

I DON'T CARE
ABOUT YOUR OPINIONS,
CORDOBA. IT'S GETTING
DARK. WE'LL BLINK DOWN
HERE TONIGHT AND
PUSH ON IN THE
MORNING.



I SAW WHAT YOU DID, MR. STERNS.

OH?

YOU *DID* SOMETHING. MADE THE FIRE-BOY'S FIRE GO OUT. AND THEN HE *DIED*.

OF COURSE I DID.

AND YOU HAVE YOUR MEN SHADOWING US, READY TO ATTACK WHEN YOU GIVE THE ORDER-- AND STEAL EITHER THIS MAP OR THE ARTIFACT, ONCE WE FIND IT. WHATEVER MAKES SENSE.



AND HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?

PFFT. OBVIOUS.



DO YOU THINK THE OTHERS WOULD LIKE TO KNOW THAT YOU KILLED THEIR COMRADE?

AT *LEAST* AS MUCH AS THEY WOULD LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR MEN. WHOM THEY WOULD THEN PROMPTLY KILL, RIGHT BEFORE THEY KILLED YOU.

ALL RIGHT. WE ARE BOTH **BAD PEOPLE**. WHAT NOW, THEN?

I WILL DO WHAT I AM SO OFTEN **FORCED** TO DO AND EXPLAIN SOMETHING THAT SHOULD BE PERFECTLY CLEAR TO ANYONE WITH HALF A BRAIN.



YOU CANNOT READ THIS MAP. I AM ONE OF ONLY A FEW PEOPLE IN THE **ENTIRE WORLD** WHO CAN.

SO, THE MAP HAS NO VALUE TO YOU. I HAVE VALUE TO YOU. FORTUNATELY, YOU HAVE VALUE TO ME.

BECAUSE I WOULD **VERY MUCH** LIKE TO BE RID OF ROSS AND HIS IDIOTS, AND YOU HAPPEN TO HAVE A SMALL ARMY NEARBY.

REMOVE THE IDIOTS, AND WE WILL GO ON TO FIND THE ARTIFACT **TOGETHER**.

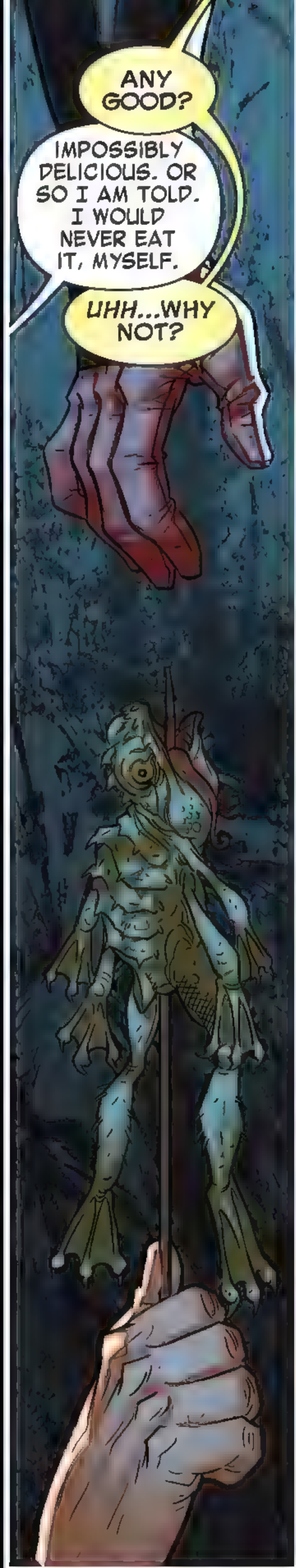




HEY,
SEÑOR. YOU
HUNGRY?

I AM.

HERE. I
COOKED YOU
A FROG.



ANY
GOOD?

IMPOSSIBLY
DELICIOUS. OR
SO I AM TOLD.
I WOULD
NEVER EAT
IT, MYSELF.

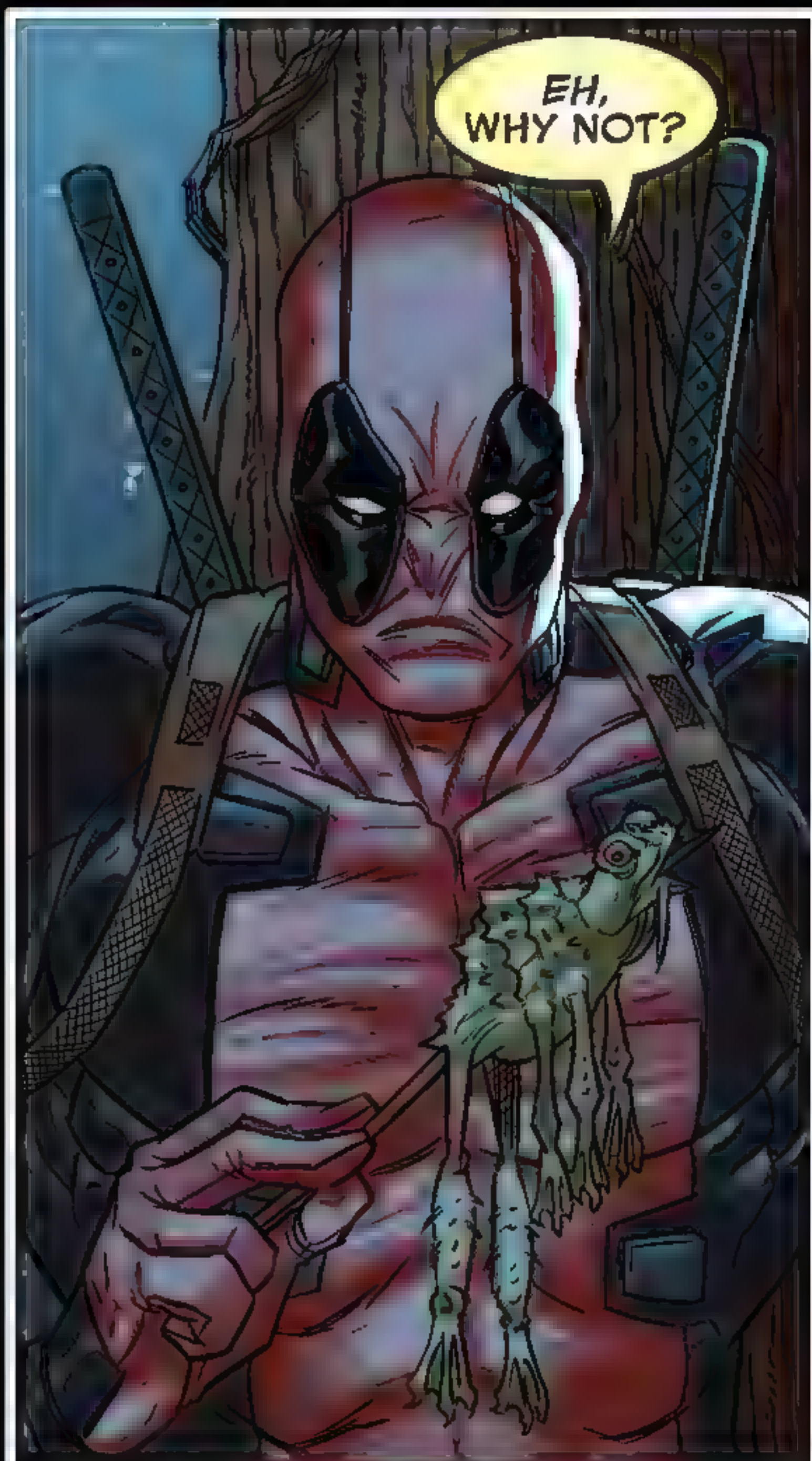
UHH...WHY
NOT?



IT IS FILLED WITH
A DEADLY POISON. OLD
MEN FROM THIS REGION
EAT IT AS THEIR FINAL MEAL,
TO KNOW TRUE GUSTATORY
BLISS BEFORE THEIR
FINAL BREATH.

BUT YOU, MY
FRIEND--I HAVE SEEN
YOU RECOVER FROM
BEING BITTEN IN HALF. YOU
COULD EAT THIS, AND BE
THE ONE PERSON WHO
HAS DONE SO AND
LIVED!

HOW DO THEY
KNOW? I MEAN, IF
IT KILLS THEM, HOW
DO THEY KNOW IT'S
SO GREAT?



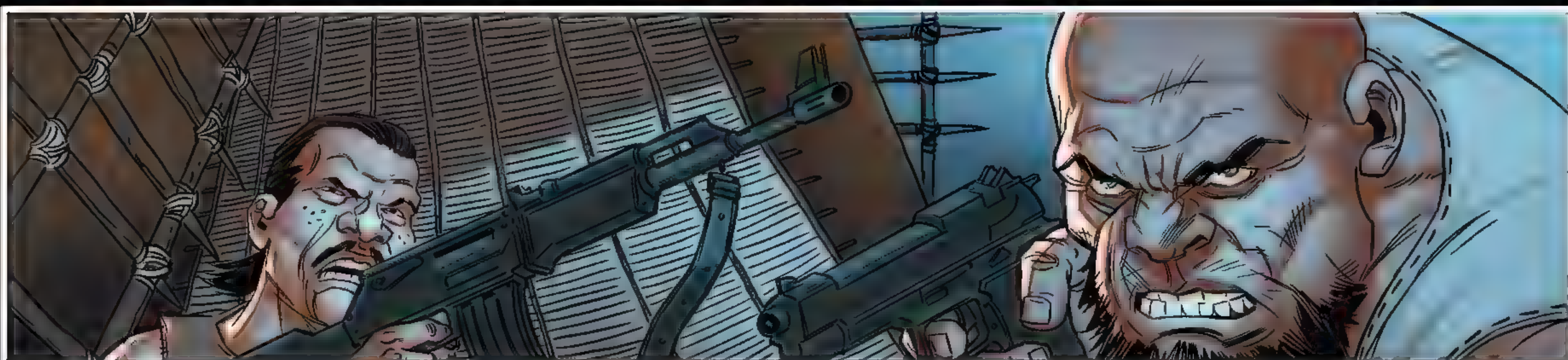
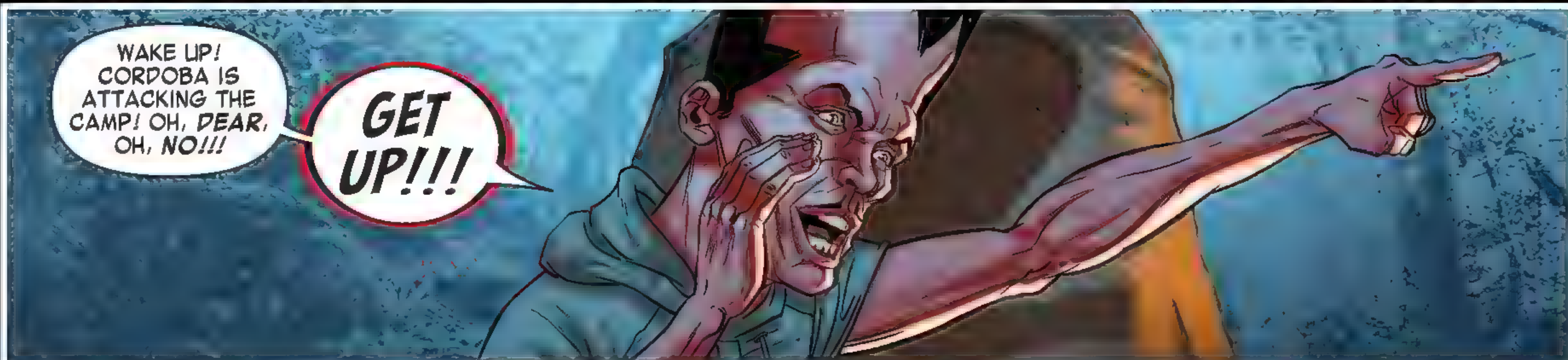
EH,
WHY NOT?



K
R
N
C
H



WHOA...
THAT'S--







MY GOD, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S REAL.

STERNS--CAN WE JUST WALK IN? FIND MY TEAM AND GET OUT?

OF COURSE NOT. ACCORDING TO THE MAP, IT'S PROTECTED BY THE TYPICAL ARRAY OF TERRIBLE TRAPS AND PUZZLES.

BUT YOU CAN GET US THROUGH THOSE, RIGHT?

CERTAINLY. IF YOU PROTECT ME PROPERLY ONCE WE'RE IN, I'LL GET US TO THE CENTER OF THE TEMPLE. ACCORDING TO THE MAP, THAT'S WHERE THE ARTIFACT RESTS.

NOPE.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN READ THE MAP. I HAVE TO GO IN.

YOU CAN GUIDE US OVER THE RADIO JUST AS EASILY, STERNS. LOOK, I WATCHED YOU OUTFOX MEPHISTO, FOR GOD'S SAKE. I KNOW WHAT YOU BRING TO THE TEAM.

BUT IF YOU THINK I'M GOING TO LET THE DAMN **LEADER** NEAR AN ARTIFACT OF ABSOLUTE POWER, YOU'RE KIDDING YOURSELF.

THEN HOW DO YOU PRESUME TO CONVINCE ME TO HELP YOU NOW?

SAME AS EVER. YOU KNOW WHAT I'M CAPABLE OF.

I DO. AND YOU WORRY ABOUT ME GETTING MY HANDS ON THAT ARTIFACT.

VERY WELL.

DEADPOOL--YOU STAY OUT HERE WITH STERNS. PROTECT HIM IN CASE CORDOBA COMES BACK. KEEP HIM ALIVE.

UNLESS IT SEEMS LIKE HE'S TRYING TO BETRAY US. IF THAT HAPPENS, KILL HIM.

AYE-AYE, CAP'N.



STERNS,
HOW DO WE
GET PAST THIS
DOOR?

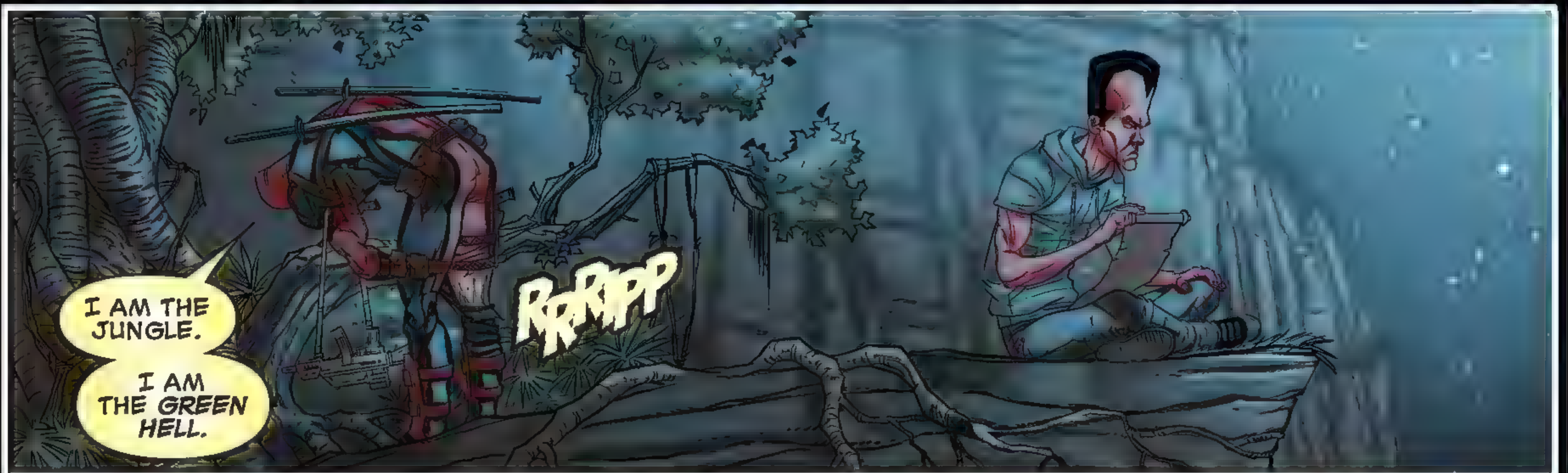
JUST PUT IN THE
COMBINATION. I'LL
READ IT OFF FOR YOU.
LISTEN CAREFULLY. IF YOU
GET IT WRONG, YOU'LL BE
DISINTEGRATED BY SOME
SORT OF DEATH RAY.
I'LL TRY TO SPEAK
CLEARLY.



STERNS...

JUST A
LITTLE JOKE,
ROSS.

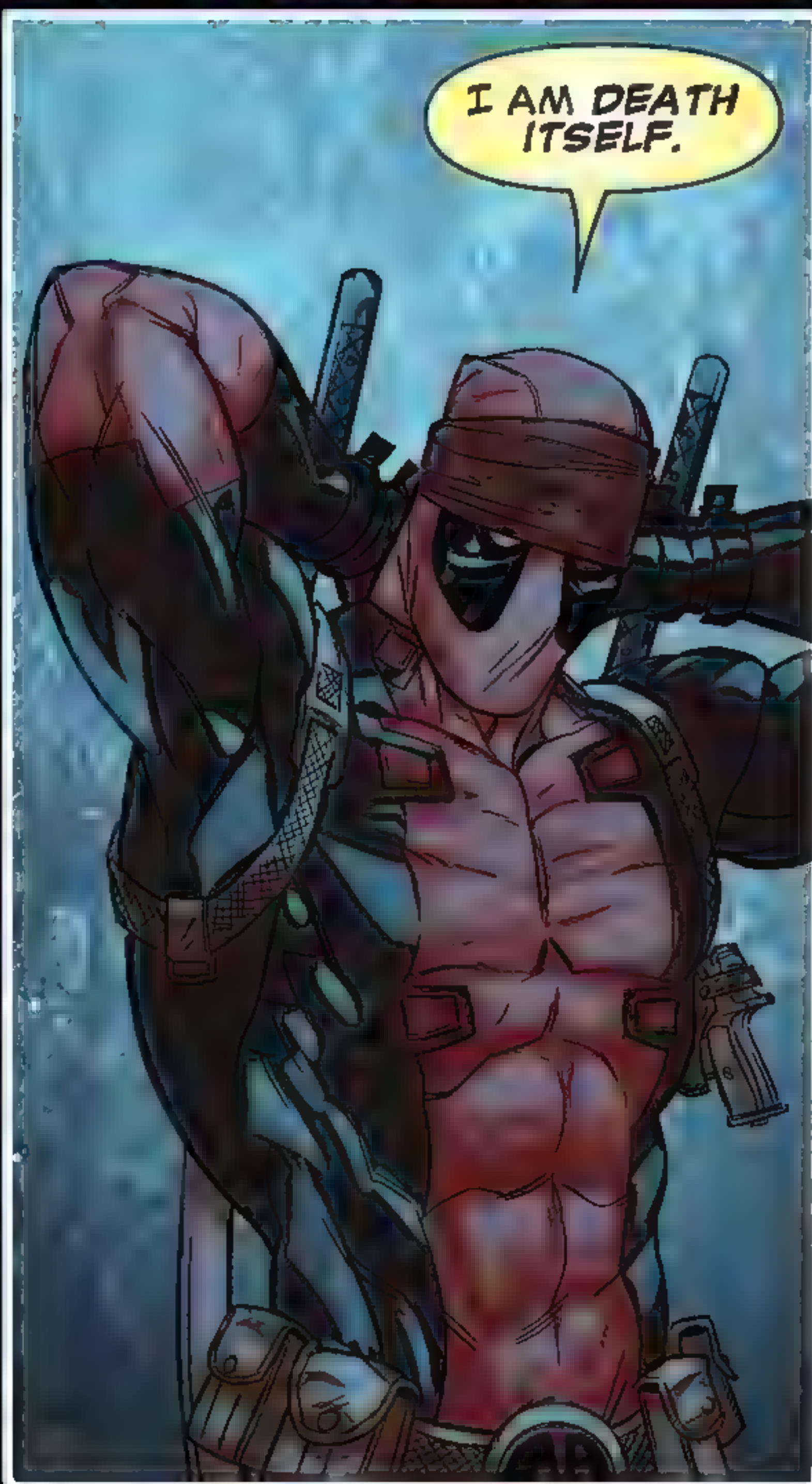
BUT THERE
REALLY IS A DEATH
RAY. NOW PAY
ATTENTION.



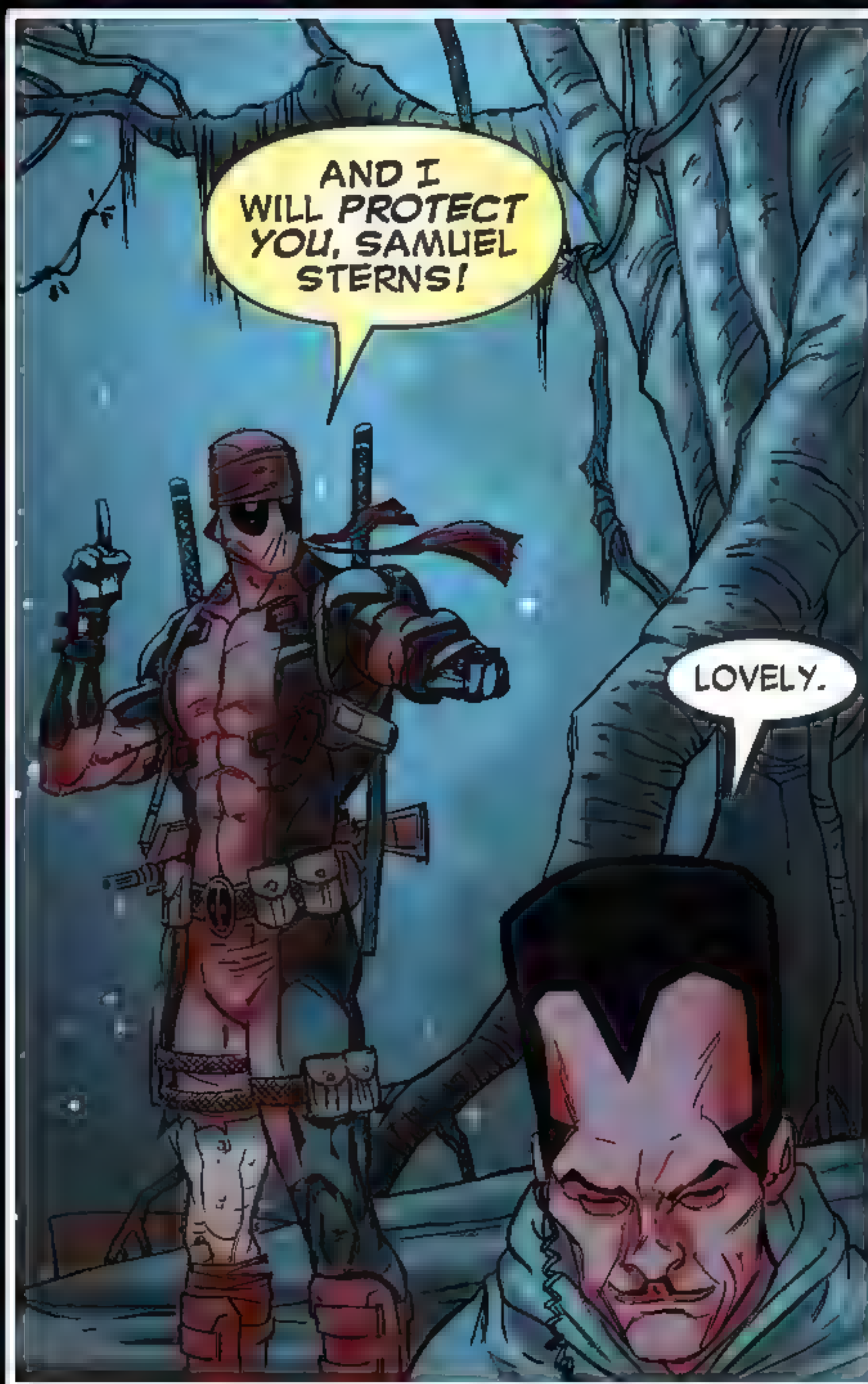
I AM THE
JUNGLE.

I AM
THE GREEN
HELL.

RRRIIP

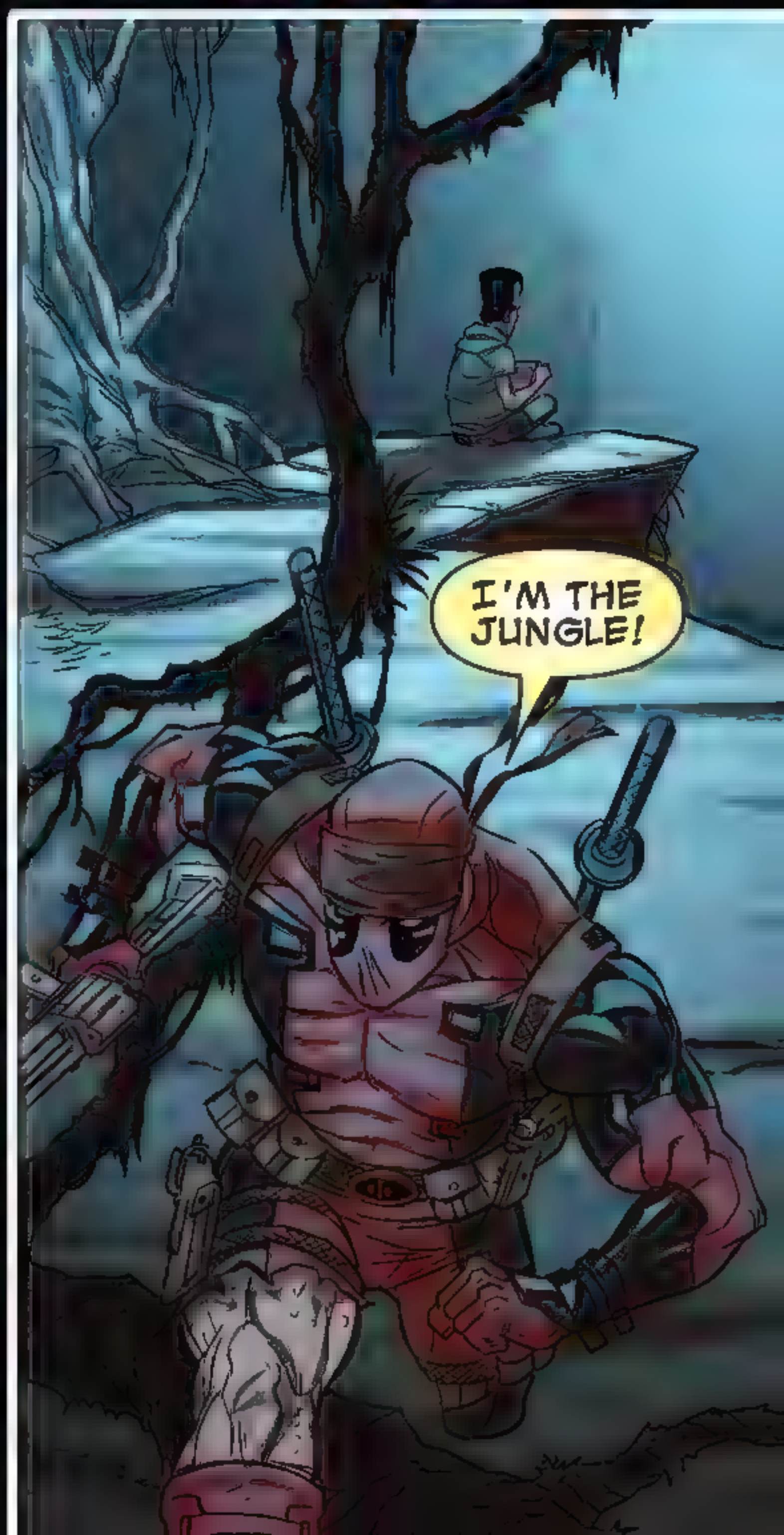


I AM DEATH
ITSELF.



AND I
WILL PROTECT
YOU, SAMUEL
STERNS!

LOVELY.



I'M THE
JUNGLE!



WHICH TUNNEL?

HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?

STERNS, WHICH WAY?

I'M SORRY, THADDEUS, BUT THE MAP IS UNCLEAR. IT LOOKS LIKE YOU COULD GO EITHER WAY. YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A LARGE CRYSTAL STATUE OF A JACKAL.

FIND THAT, AND YOU'RE ON THE RIGHT PATH.



SPLIT UP?

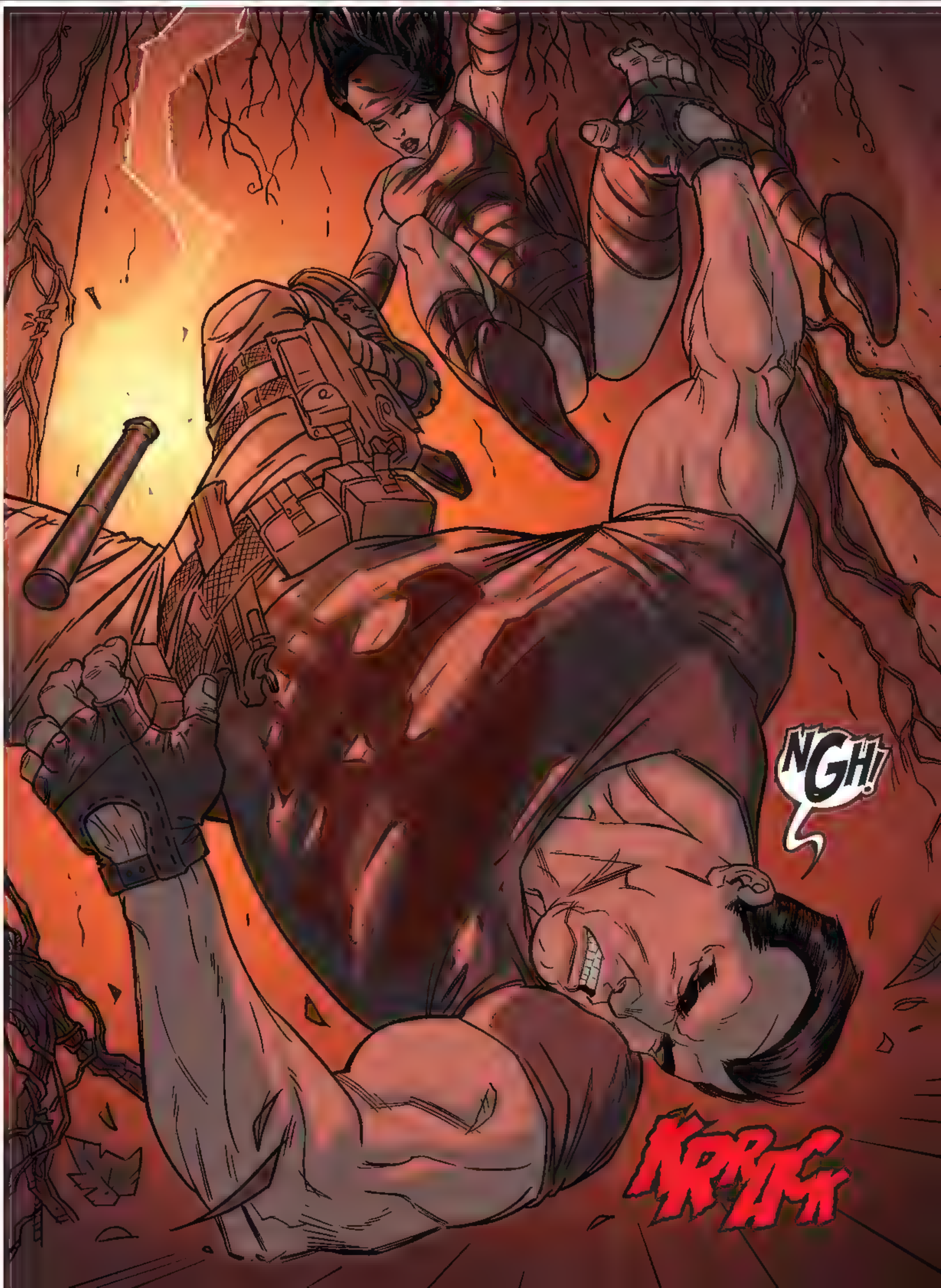
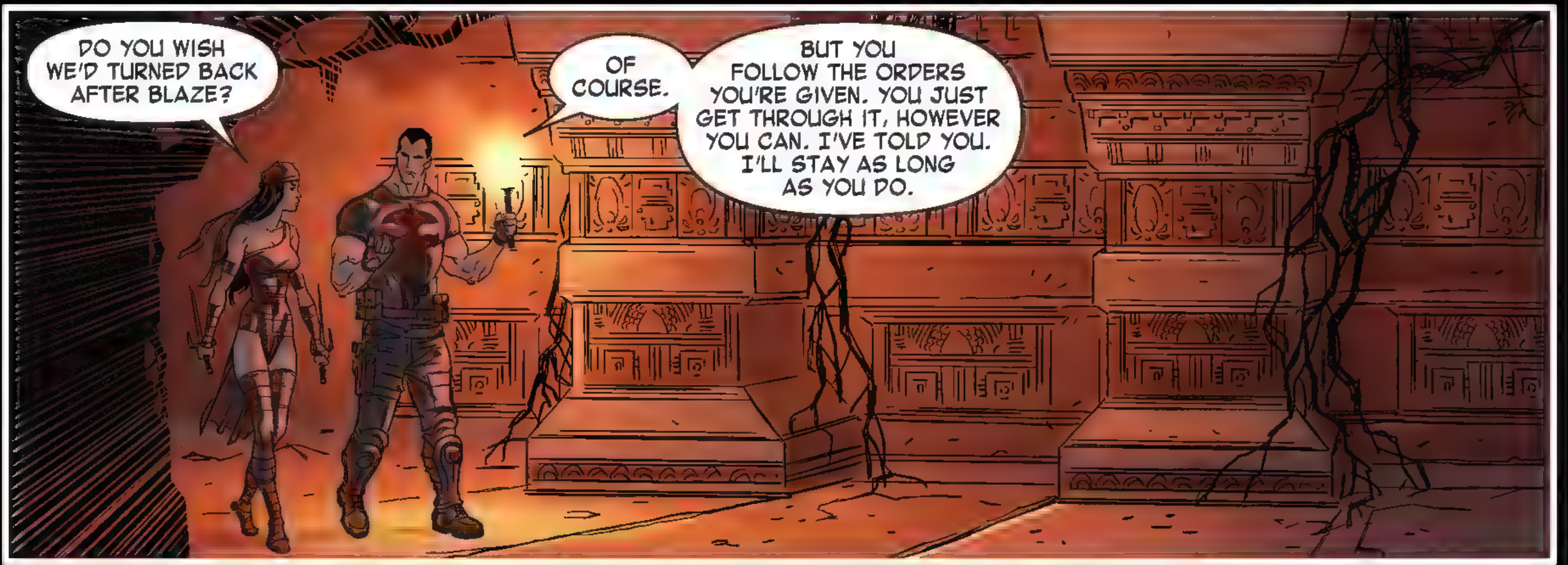
YES. IT'LL BE MORE EFFICIENT. WE'LL REGROUP HERE IN FIFTEEN MINUTES. IF NEITHER TEAM'S FOUND THIS DAMN STATUE BY THEN, WE'LL FIGURE OUT SOMETHING ELSE.

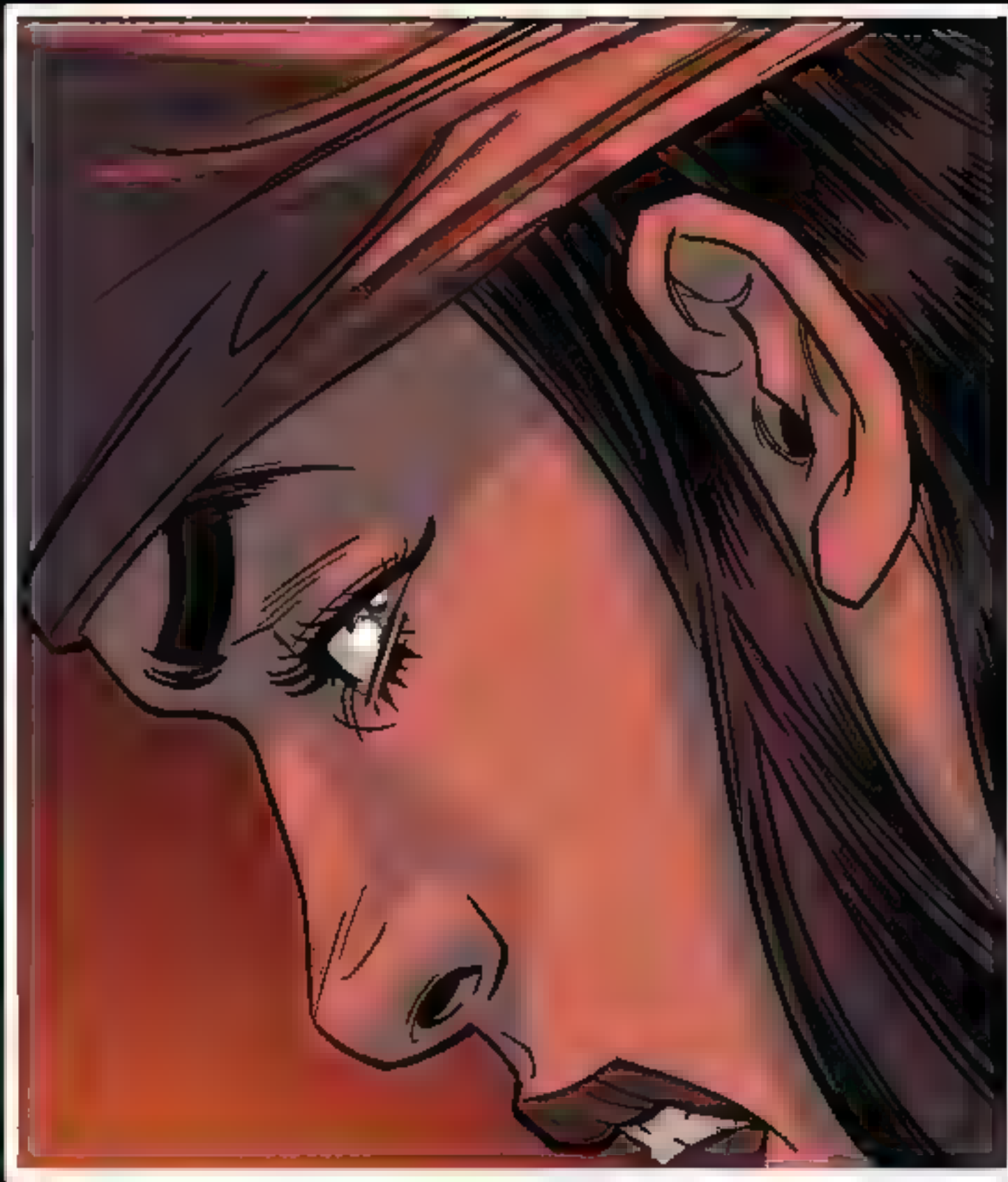
ALL RIGHT.



OOPS.

CRASH









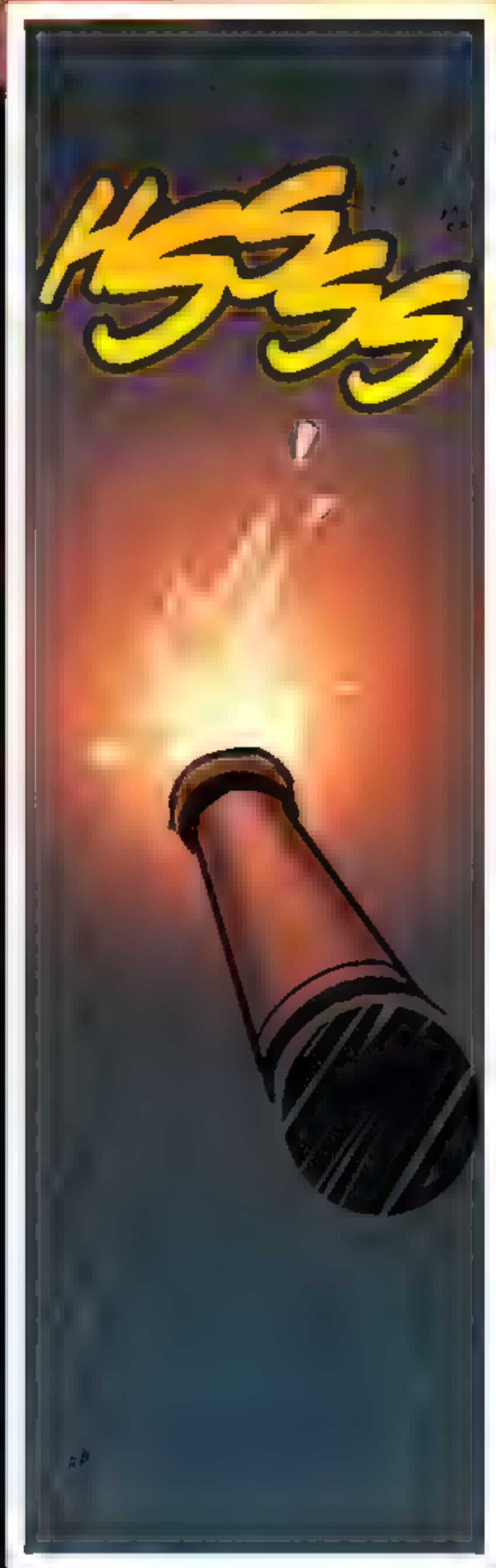
IS THIS...

I...THINK SO.

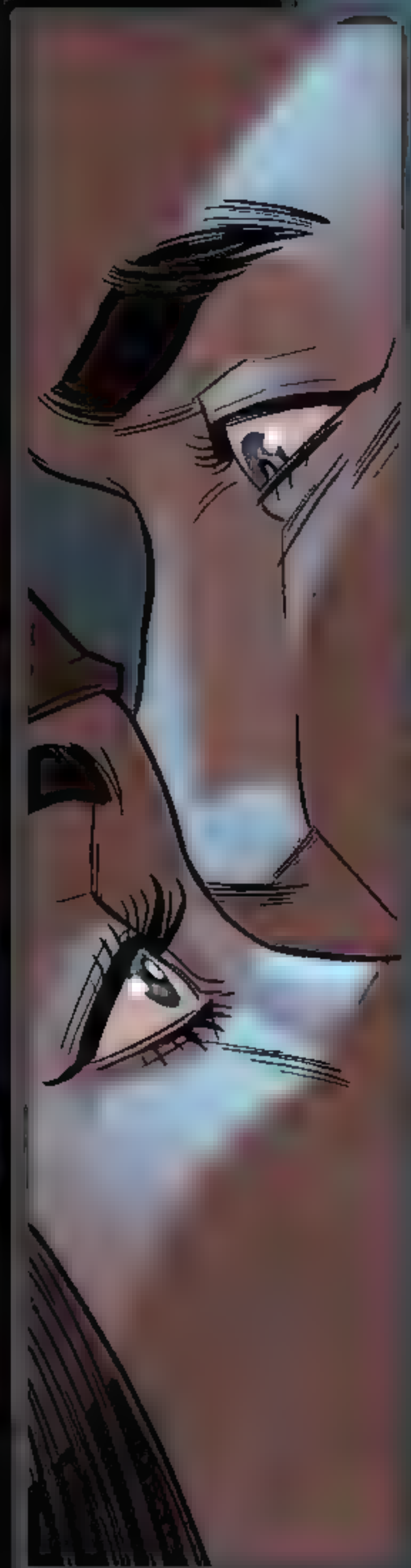
NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD BE LIKE *THIS*. THOUGHT I'D TAKE ONE TO THE HEAD.

HONESTLY... FRANK...

BOOM



...BEST WAY I'VE EVER GONE.



CONTINUED.



ALL-NEW
**MARVEL
NOW!**

CHARLES SOULE
PACO DIAZ
ISRAEL SILVA

026



HONDURAS.

THIS
IS THE
END.

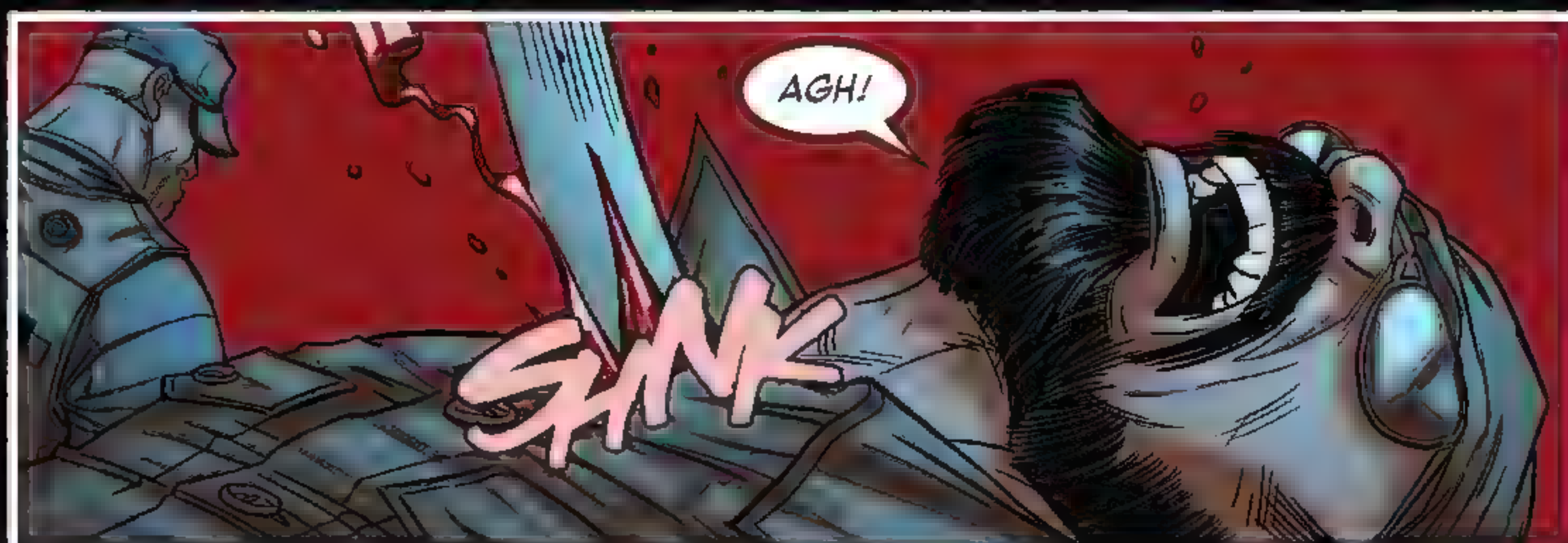
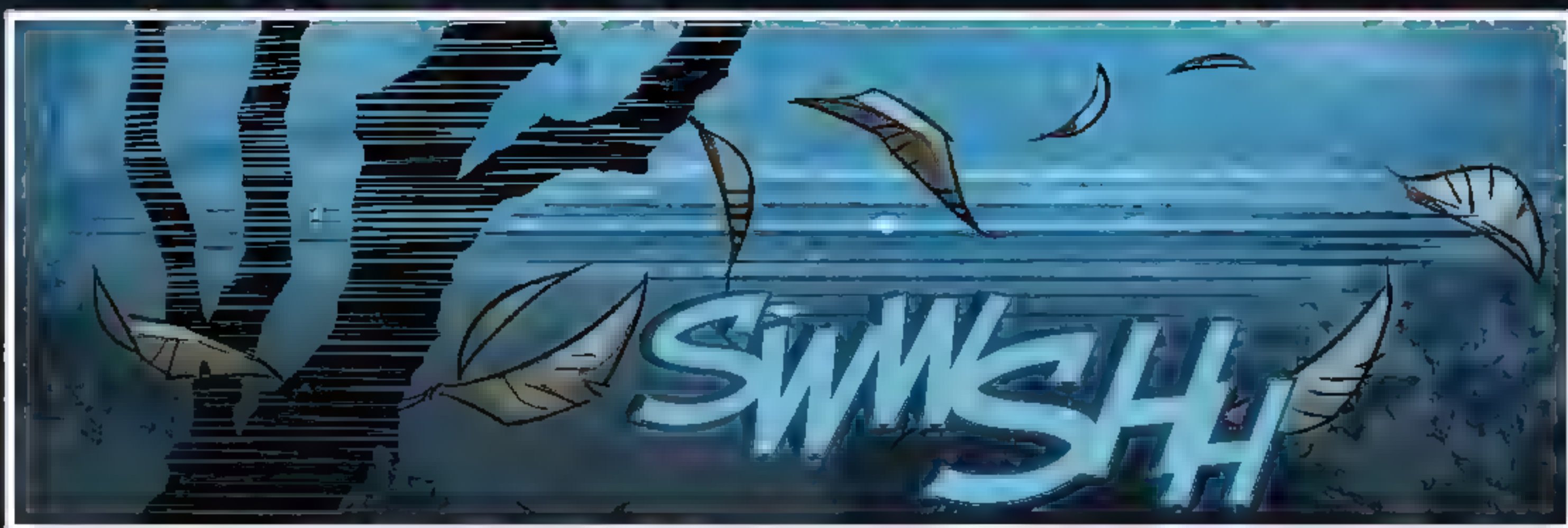


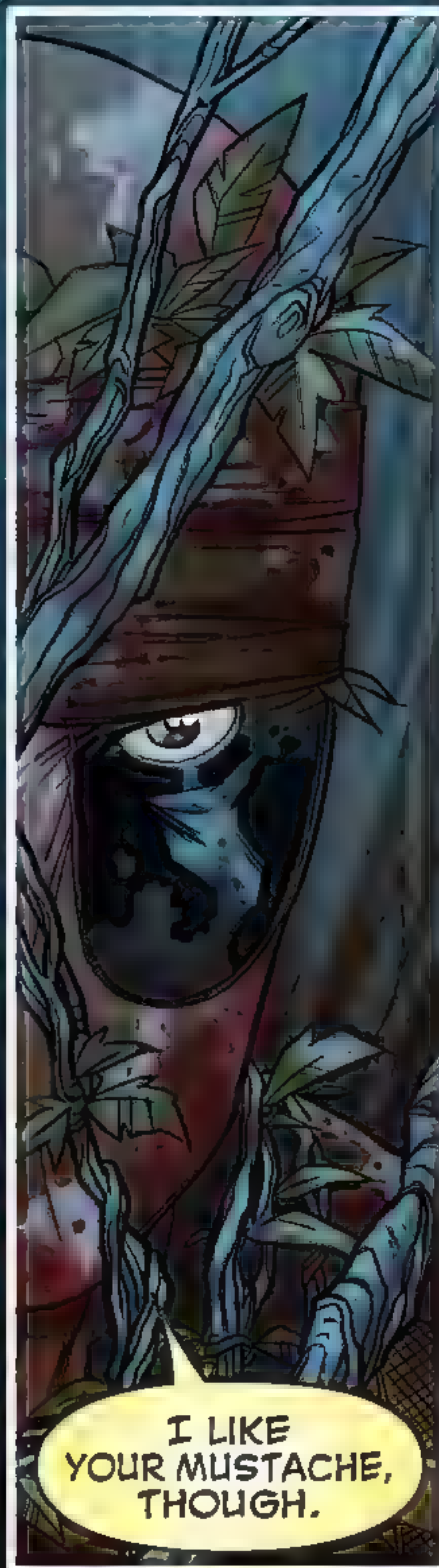
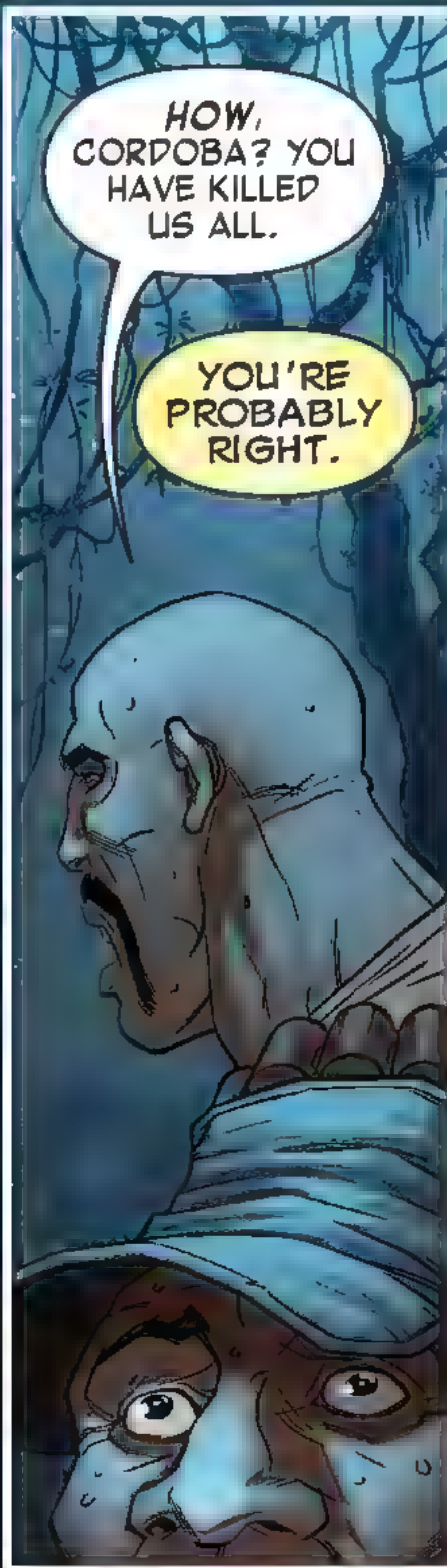
TEN THOUSAND
DOLLARS TO THE
MAN WHO BRINGS
ME THE HEAD OF
SAMUEL STERNS!

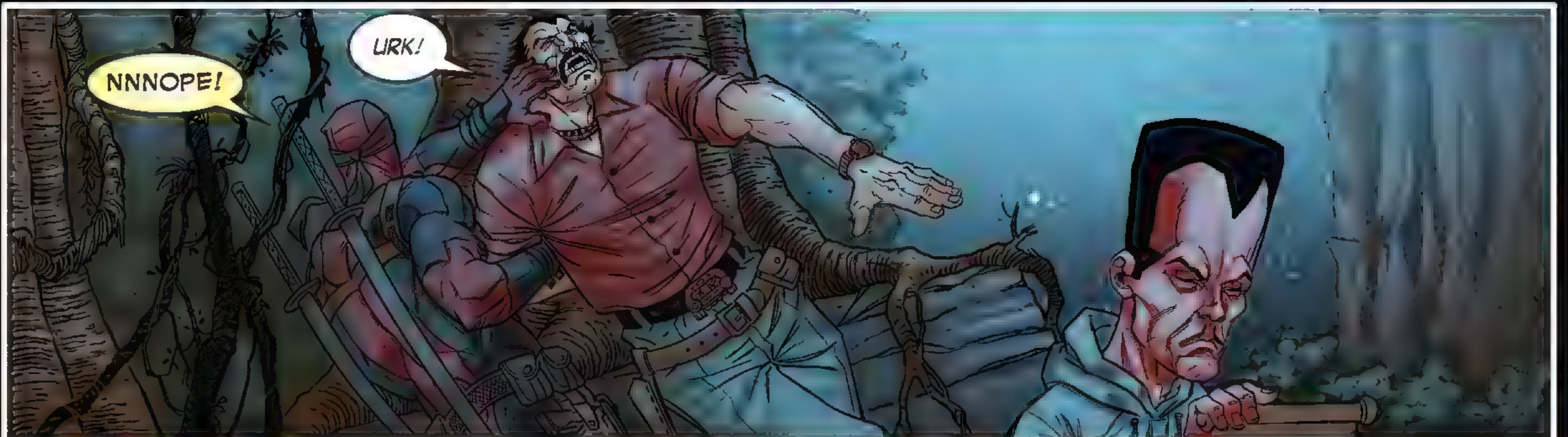
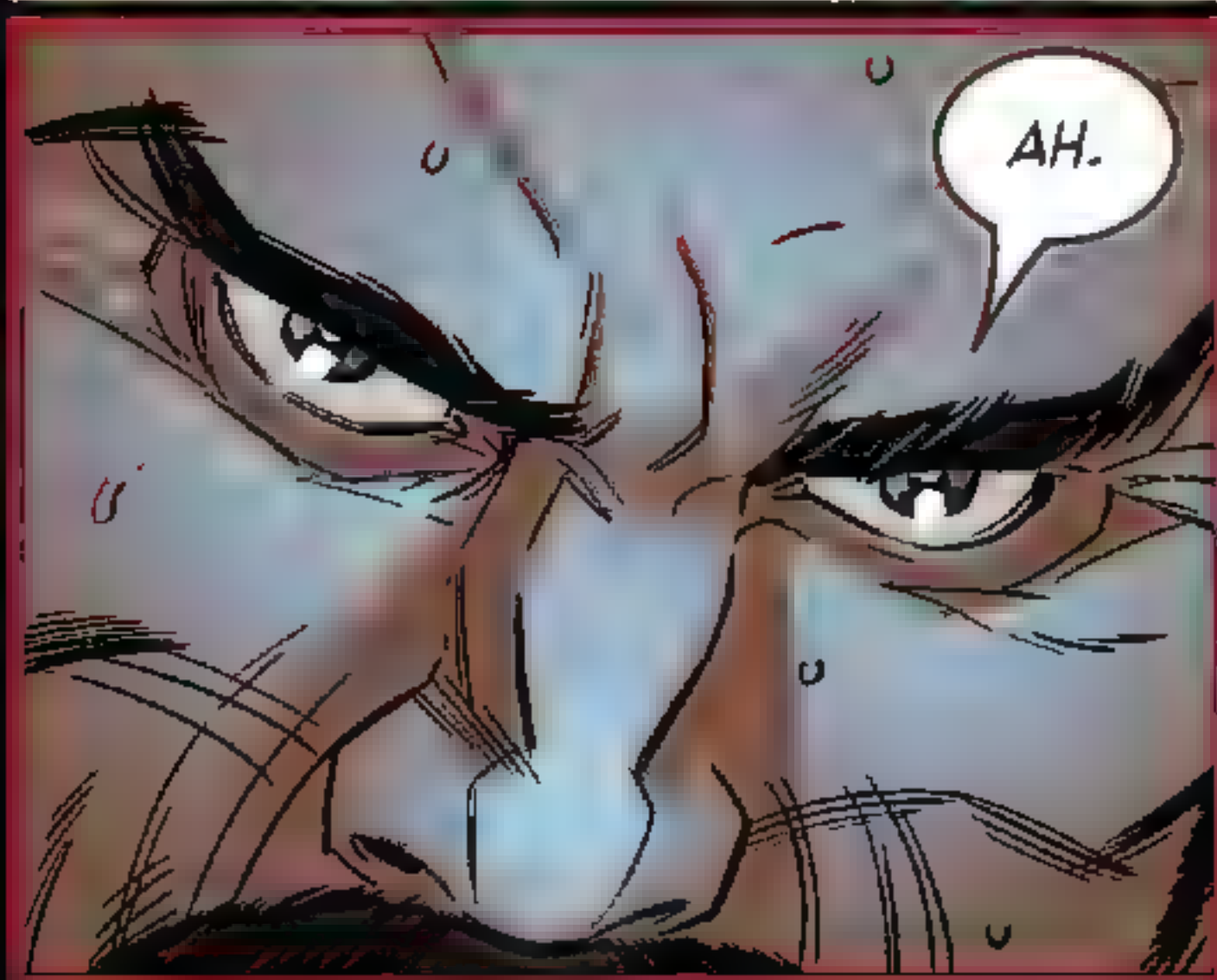
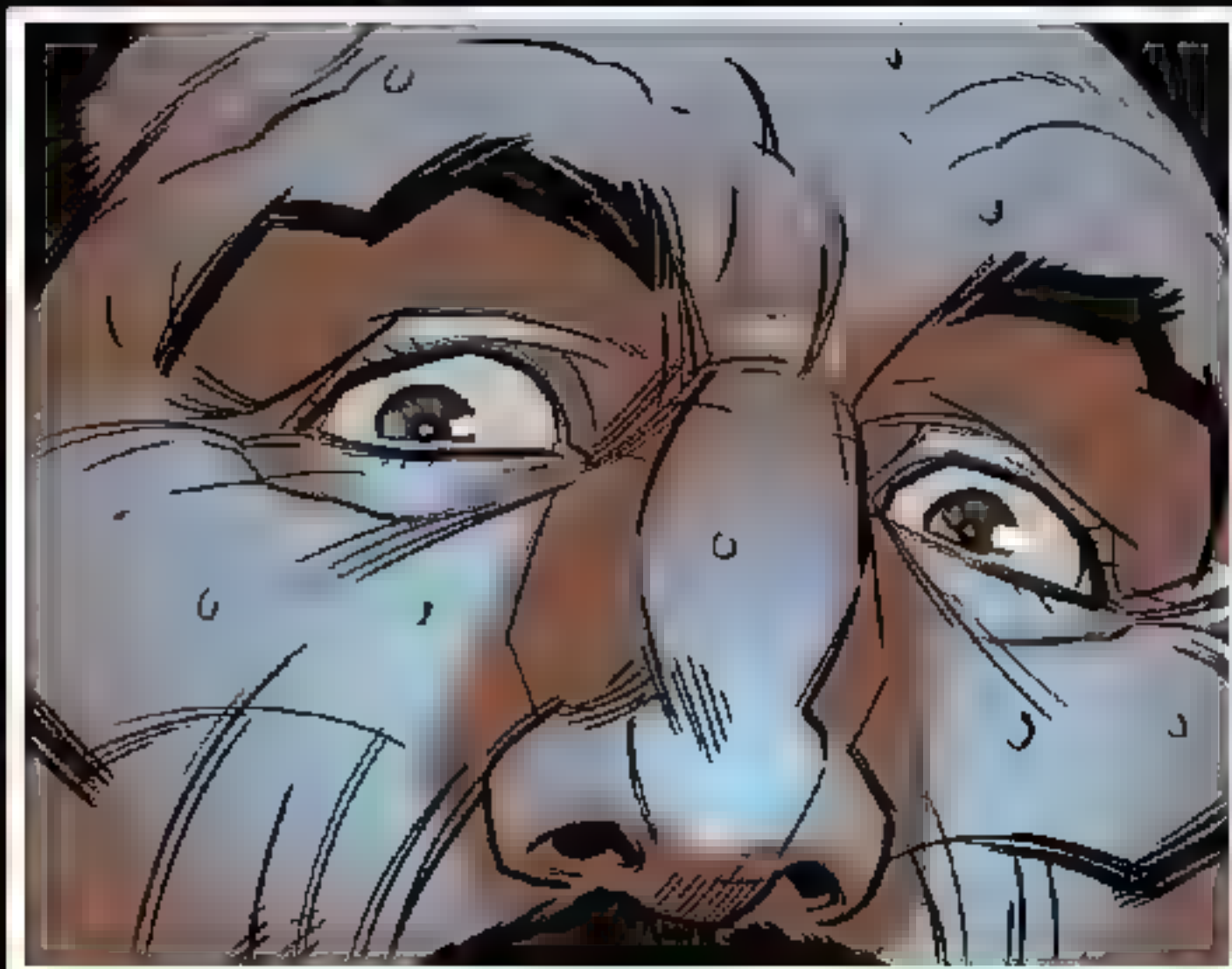
IT IS THE
PERFECT SHAPE TO
TURN INTO A **TOILET
BOWL**, AND THAT
TRAITOROUS RED
BASTARD **DESERVES
NO BETTER.**

KILL THE
REST, TOO. **NONE
OF THEM LEAVE THIS
JUNGLE ALIVE.**

YES, SEÑOR
CORDOBA.









PLEASE,
SEÑOR! DO
NOT KILL ME!
I CAN STILL
HELP YOU!

I THINK
I'LL BE ALL
RIGHT, BUT
THANK YOU.

YOU, THOUGH--
ALL THAT RUNNING,
YOU MUST BE
STARVING.



NO, I...

DON'T
WORRY, CORDOBA.
LET ME GET YOU
A SNACK.



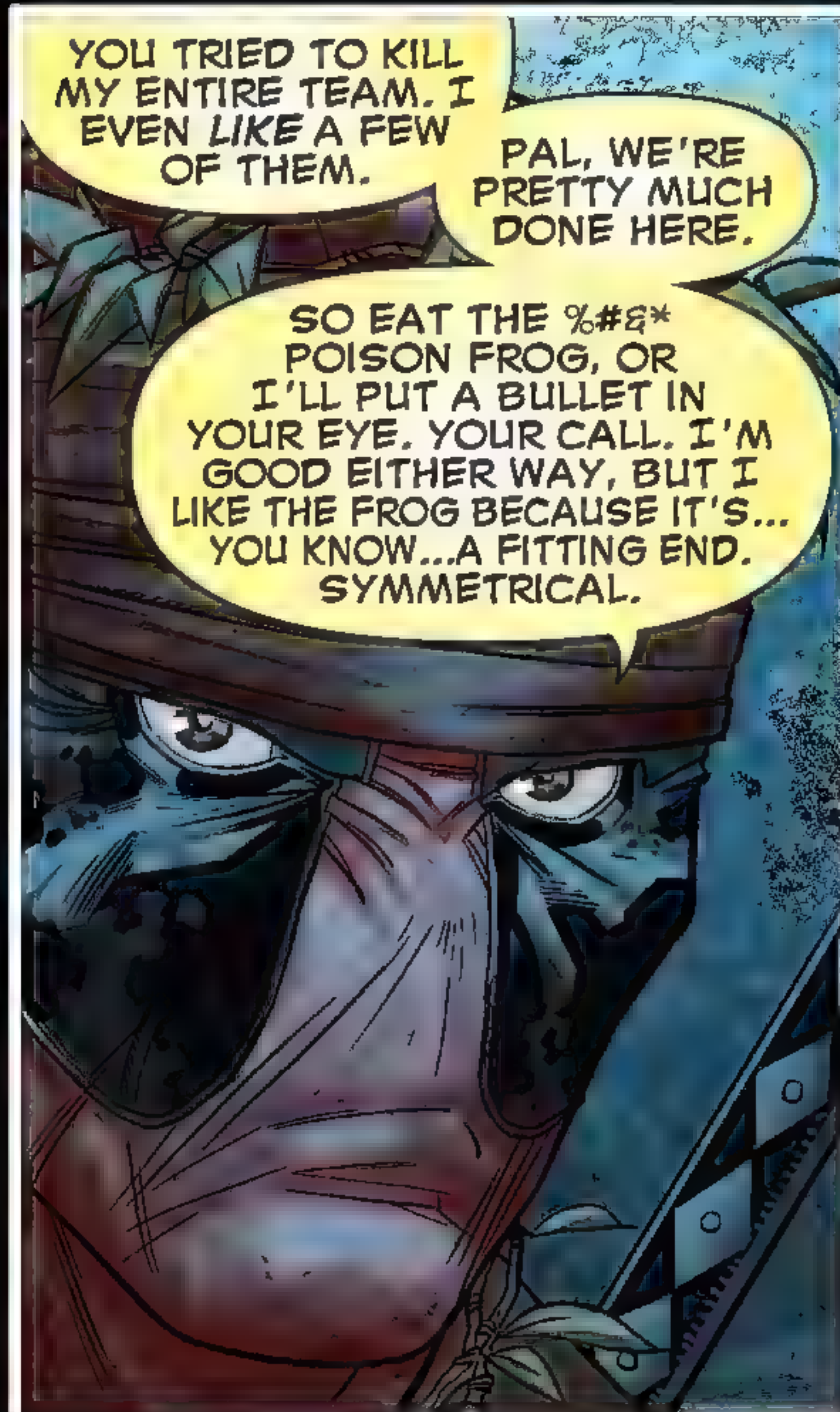
REMEMBER
THIS LITTLE
GUY?

YOU WERE
RIGHT. IT WAS
ABSOLUTELY
DELICIOUS.

OH, NO.

TRY IT.

NO,
PLEASE...



YOU TRIED TO KILL
MY ENTIRE TEAM. I
EVEN LIKE A FEW
OF THEM.

PAL, WE'RE
PRETTY MUCH
DONE HERE.

SO EAT THE %&*
POISON FROG, OR
I'LL PUT A BULLET IN
YOUR EYE. YOUR CALL. I'M
GOOD EITHER WAY, BUT I
LIKE THE FROG BECAUSE IT'S...
YOU KNOW...A FITTING END.
SYMMETRICAL.



EVERYONE
LIKES CLOSURE,
YOU KNOW?



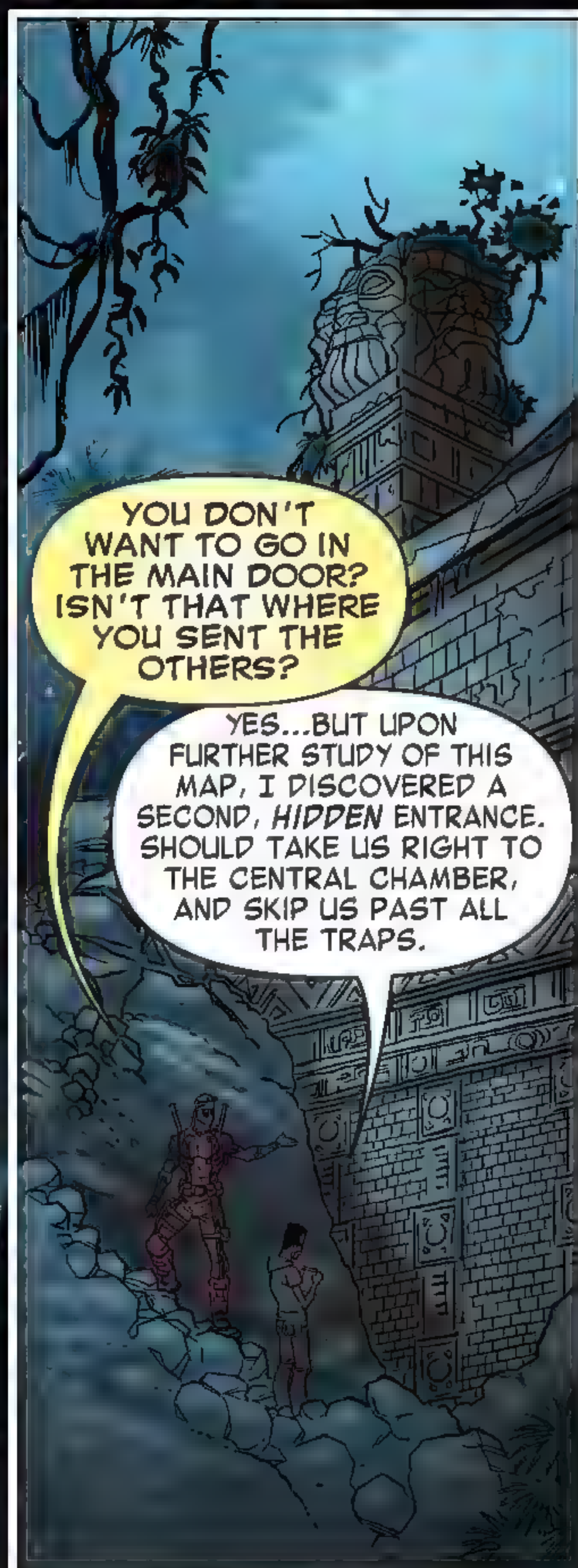
FINISHED?

YEP.

GOOD. THE OTHERS RADIOED IN--ASKED US TO JOIN THEM.

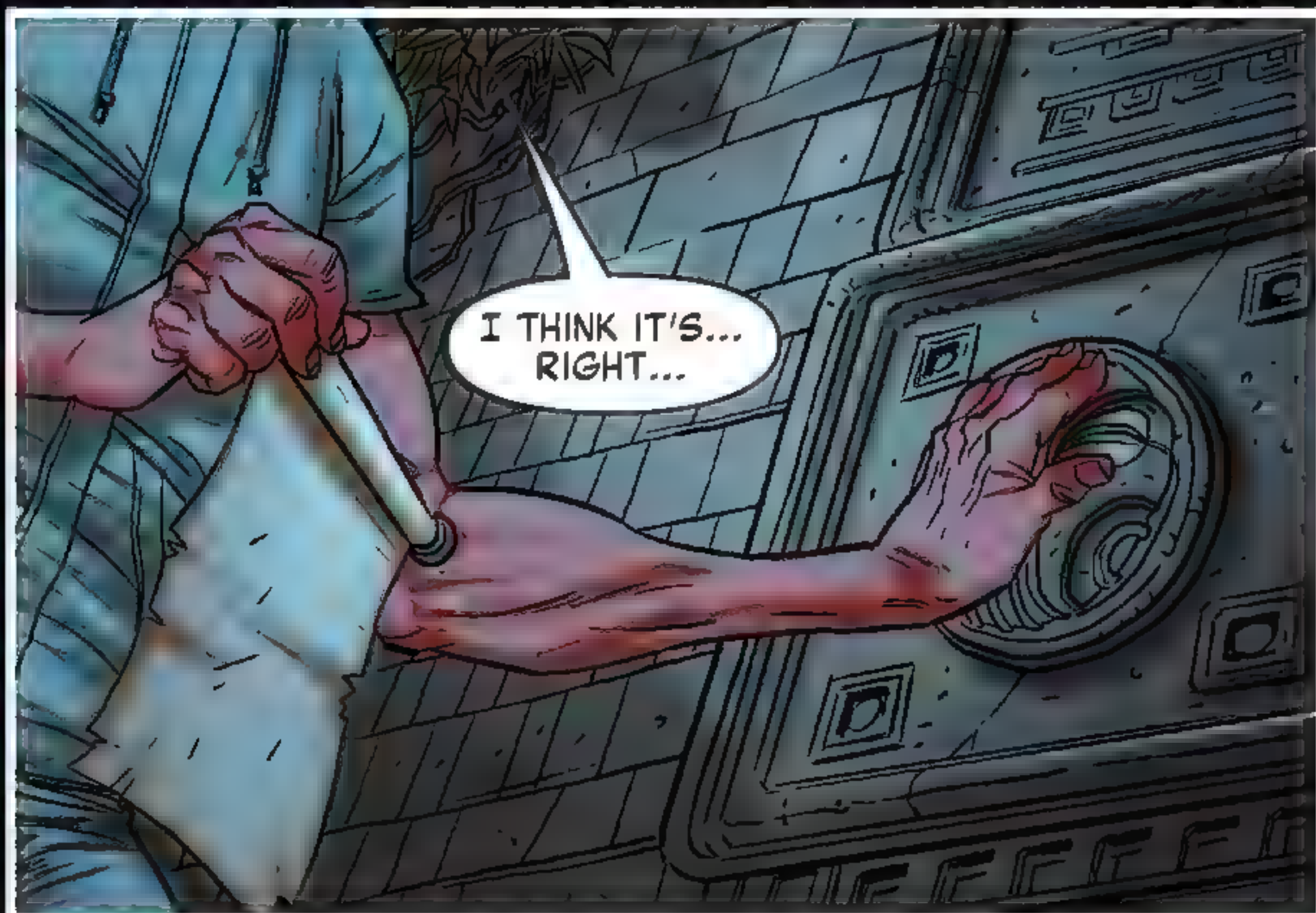
YEAH? ALL RIGHT. GOOD DEAL. I'M DYING TO SEE WHAT'S IN THAT TEMPLE.

THEN YOU'RE IN LUCK.

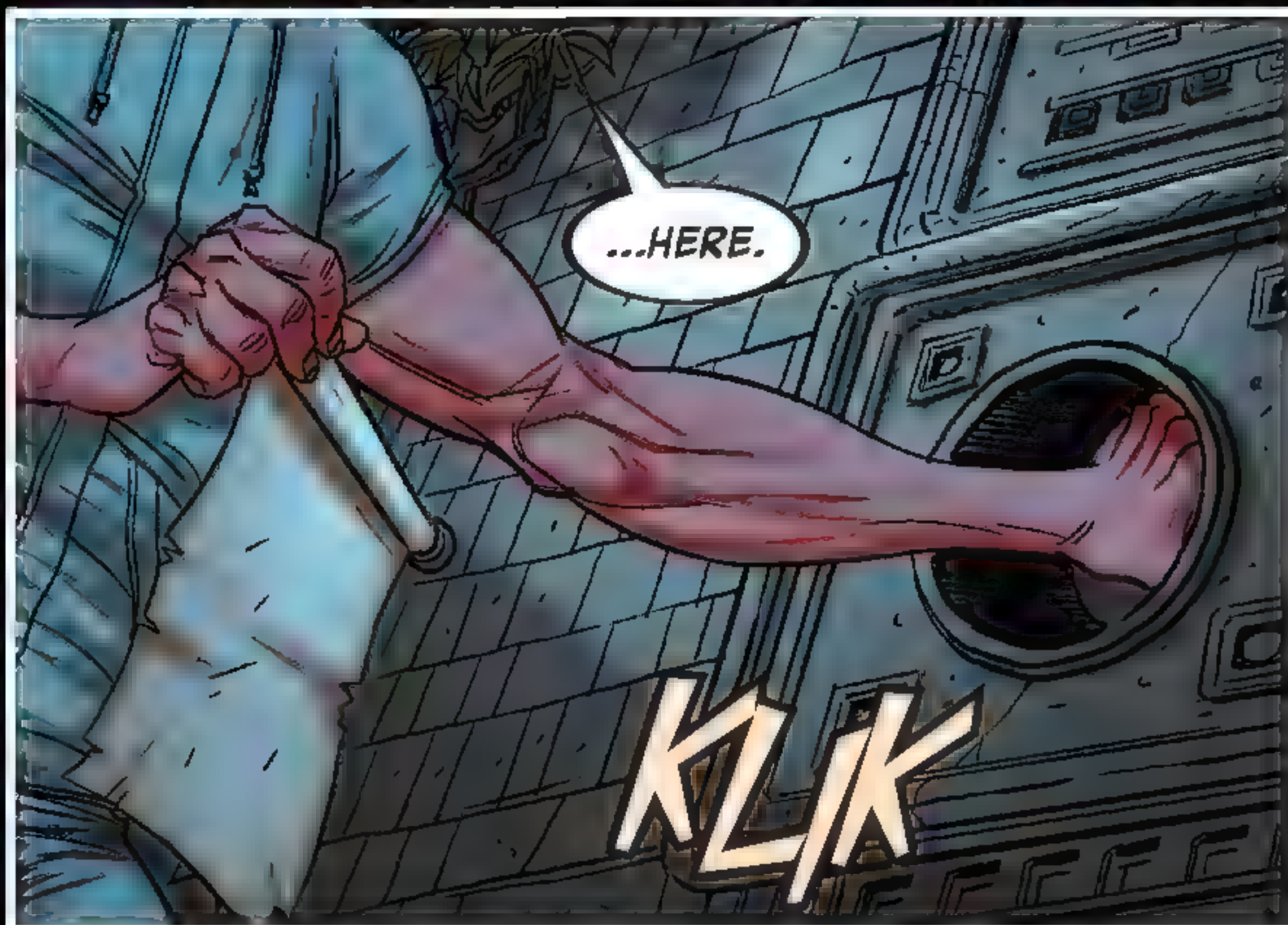


YOU DON'T WANT TO GO IN THE MAIN DOOR? ISN'T THAT WHERE YOU SENT THE OTHERS?

YES...BUT UPON FURTHER STUDY OF THIS MAP, I DISCOVERED A SECOND, HIDDEN ENTRANCE. SHOULD TAKE US RIGHT TO THE CENTRAL CHAMBER, AND SKIP US PAST ALL THE TRAPS.



I THINK IT'S... RIGHT...



...HERE.

KLIK



PERFECT.

PERFECT FOR WHO? MOLA RAM?

I LIKE MY HEART WHERE IT IS, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

UNLESS... ARE THERE SANKARA STONES IN HERE?

PROBABLY NOT.

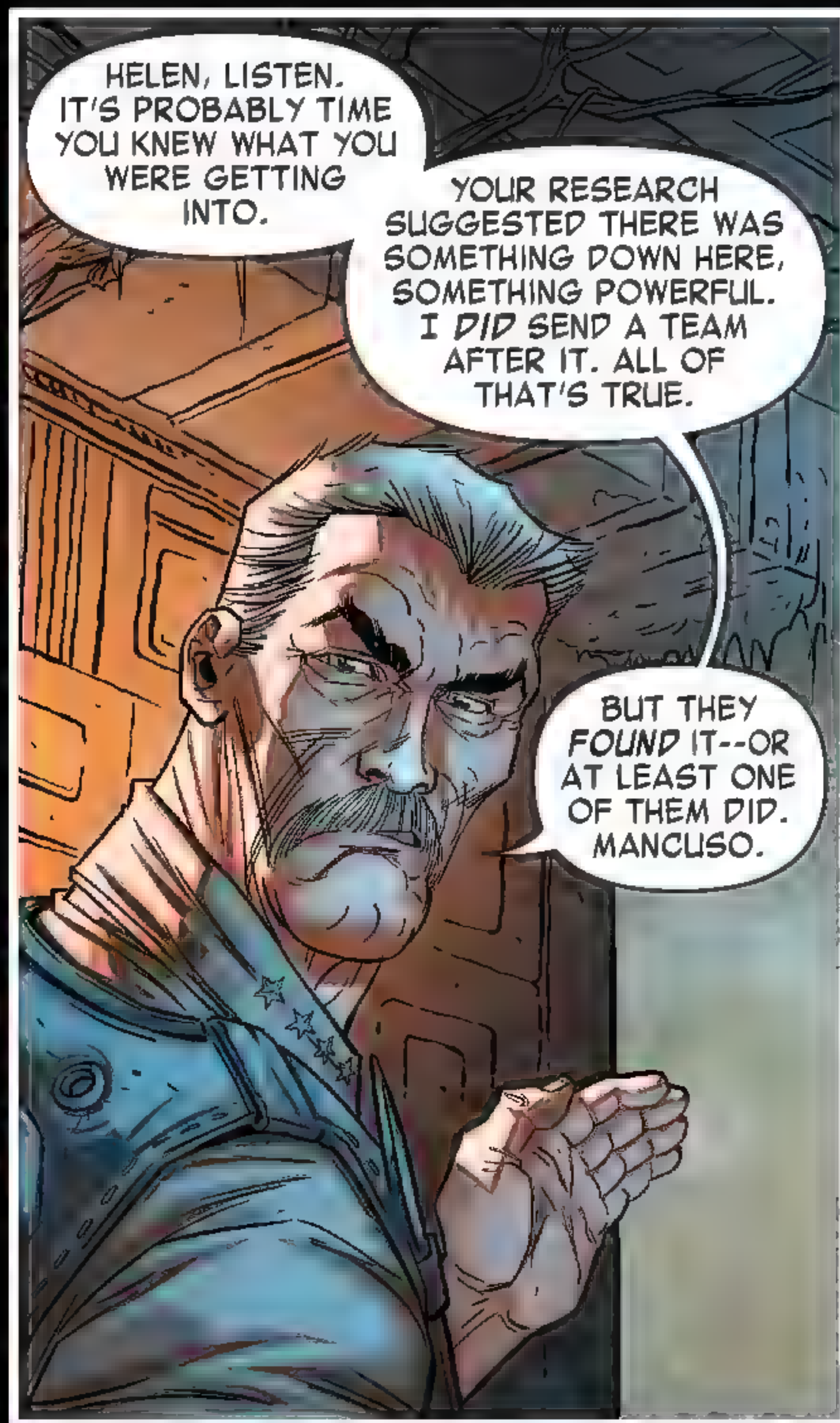


I THINK WE'RE GETTING CLOSE, ROSS. WHOLE PLACE FEELS LIKE IT'S VIBRATING.

DO YOU THINK YOUR TEAM GOT THIS FAR?

OH, I'M PRETTY SURE THEY DID, YEAH.

HOW DO YOU KNOW?



HELEN, LISTEN. IT'S PROBABLY TIME YOU KNEW WHAT YOU WERE GETTING INTO.

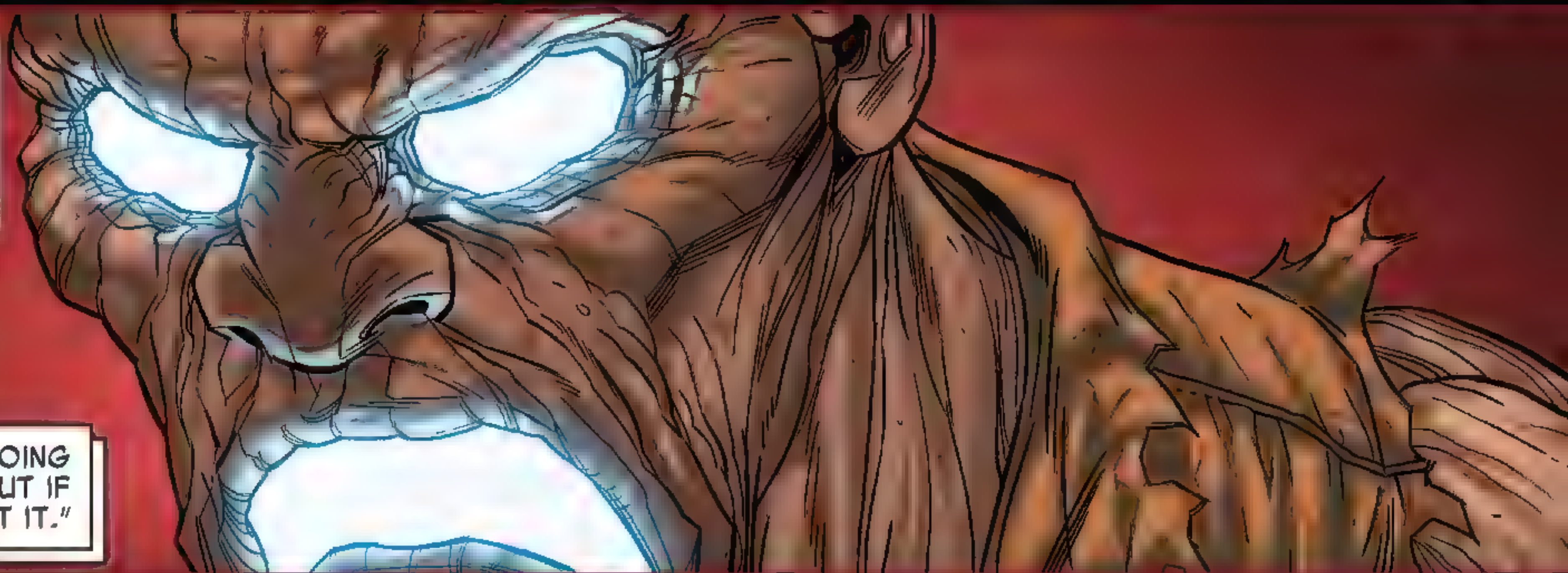
YOUR RESEARCH SUGGESTED THERE WAS SOMETHING DOWN HERE, SOMETHING POWERFUL. I DID SEND A TEAM AFTER IT. ALL OF THAT'S TRUE.

BUT THEY FOUND IT--OR AT LEAST ONE OF THEM DID. MANCUSO.

"HE APPEARED TO ME, LIKE A VISION. TOLD ME HE'D END THE WORLD UNLESS I CAME TO SEE HIM. I BELIEVED IT. WHATEVER HE FOUND DOWN HERE... IT CHANGED HIM.

"THAT'S WHY I'M HERE. TO LEARN THE TRUTH, BUT ALSO TO STOP HIM, IF I CAN.

"I'M NOT SURE HOW SAFE IT'S GOING TO BE. I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE, BUT IF YOU WANT TO TURN BACK, I'D GET IT."



YOU'RE NUTS. I'M A **SCIENTIST**, AND I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR THIS THING MY ENTIRE ADULT LIFE.

I'M WITH YOU TO THE BITTER END.

ASSUMING WE CAN GET THROUGH **THIS**, THAT IS.

DON'T WORRY. I CAN HANDLE IT. STEP BACK A WAYS.

HOW? IT'S HUGE! SOLID STONE!



KRRK
I'M STRONGER THAN I LOOK.





THANK YOU
FOR YOUR HELP
BACK THERE, DEADPOOL.
I DON'T KNOW HOW I
WOULD HAVE MADE IT
THROUGH WITHOUT
YOU.

UH-HUH. MY
PLEASURE.

I REALLY
THINK THIS TEAM
IS *FINALLY* COMING
TOGETHER. DON'T
YOU?

ALL WE REALLY
NEEDED WAS SOME
STRONG LEADERSHIP,
IF YOU ASK ME.

UH-HUH.



WAIT! STOP!
DON'T STEP
THERE!

HUH?
WHY NOT?



THERE'S A
TRAP! THAT STONE'S
THE TRIGGER. YOU
CAN'T STEP THERE.



PUT YOUR
FOOT DOWN
THERE. THAT'S
SAFE.



UH-HUH.



YOU KNOW,
YOU TALK IN
YOUR SLEEP.

WHAT?
NONSENSE! AND
HOW WOULD YOU KNOW
THAT? DO YOU WATCH
ME WHILE I
SLEEP?

I WATCH
EVERYONE WHILE
THEY SLEEP. FRANK
HAS AWFUL DREAMS,
I THINK.

WHAT IS
YOUR POINT,
DEADPOOL?

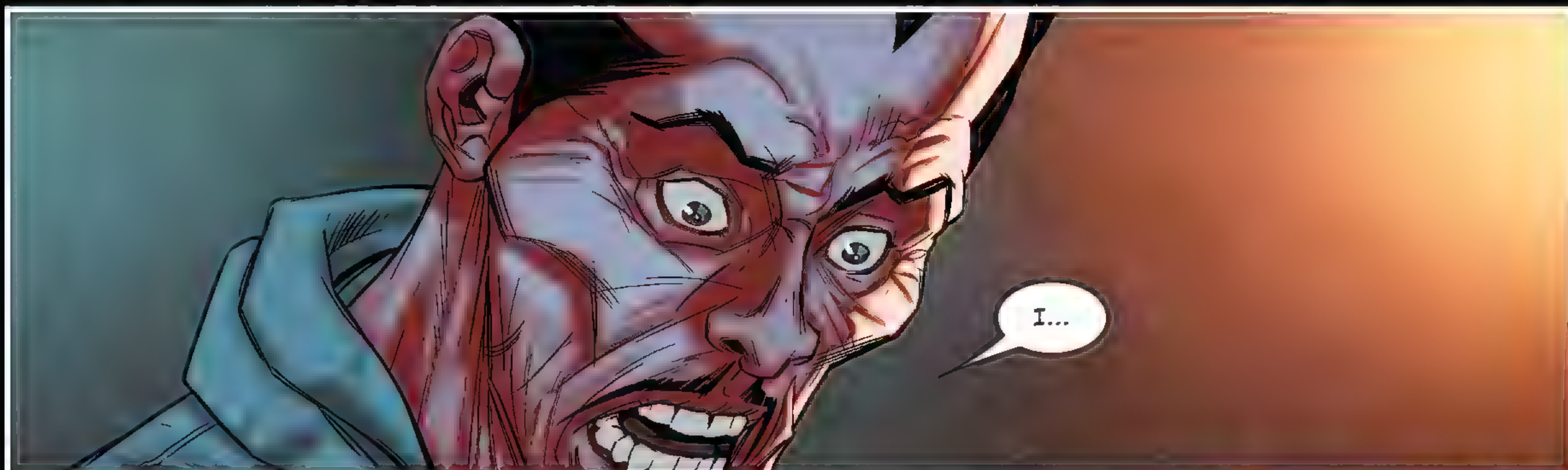
MY POINT IS THAT THE OTHERS THINK
YOU'RE *FRIENDLY*, BECAUSE YOU
HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING
OVERTLY TERRIBLE.

YOU WORK
HARD TO CONVINCE
US THAT YOU'RE
HARMLESS. JUST USEFUL
ENOUGH TO KEEP AROUND,
TO KEEP *SAFE*. BUT I'VE
HEARD YOU TALK IN
YOUR SLEEP. I KNOW
THE TRUTH.

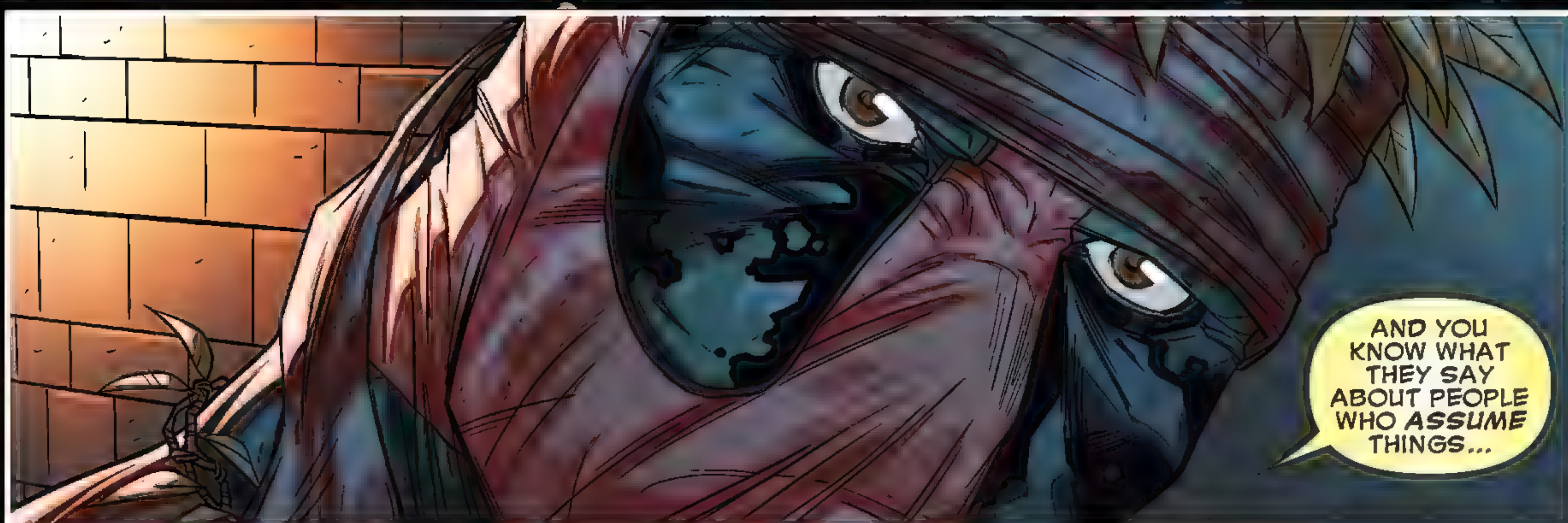
IT'S THE SAME
WITH ME. PEOPLE
ASSUME I'M DUMB,
BECAUSE I'M FUN,
AND SOME OF THE
THINGS I DO DON'T
LOOK SMART.



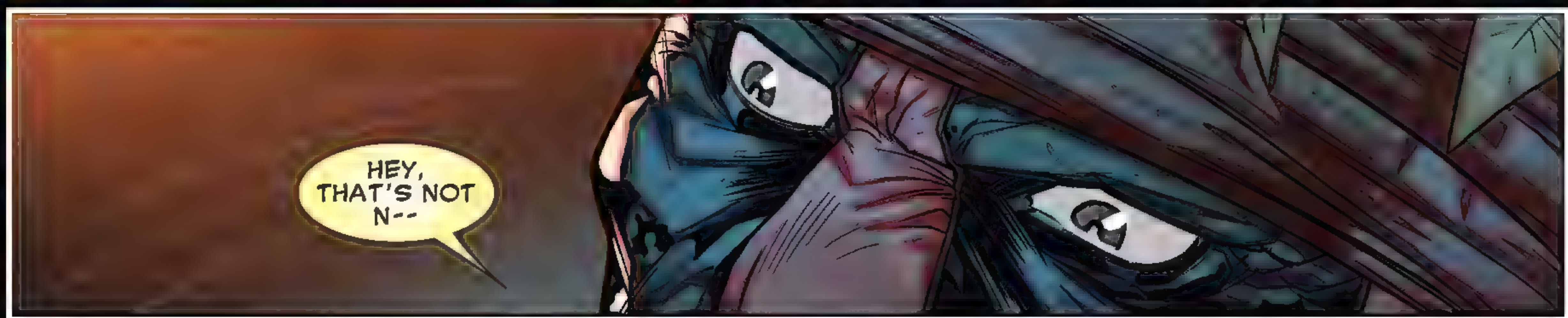
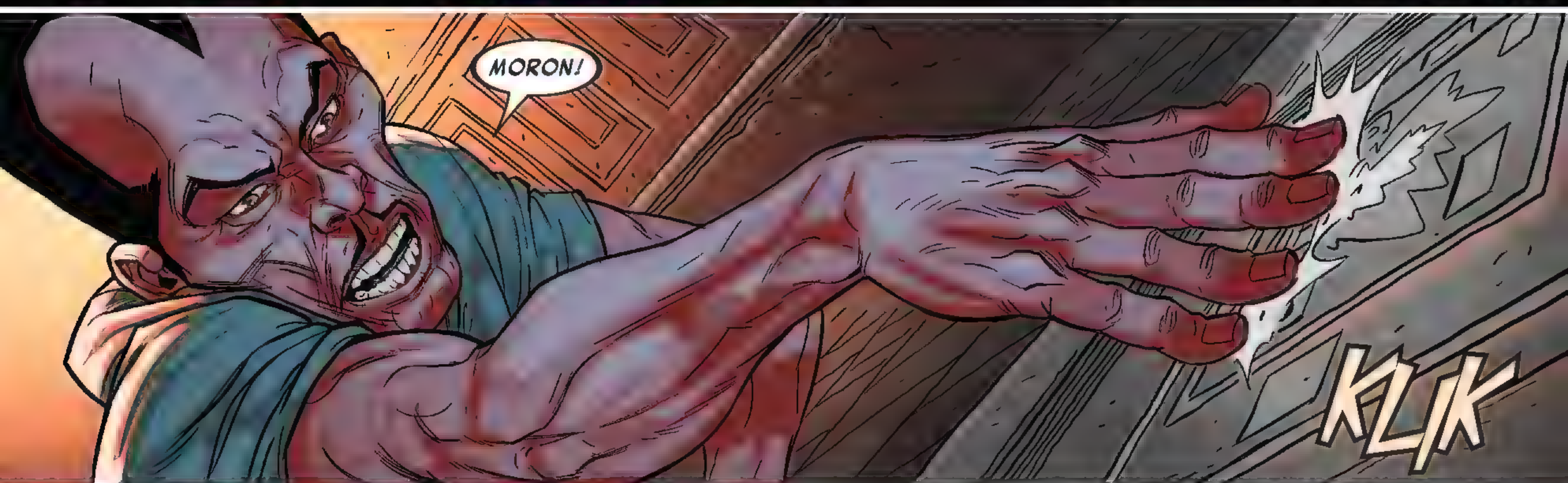
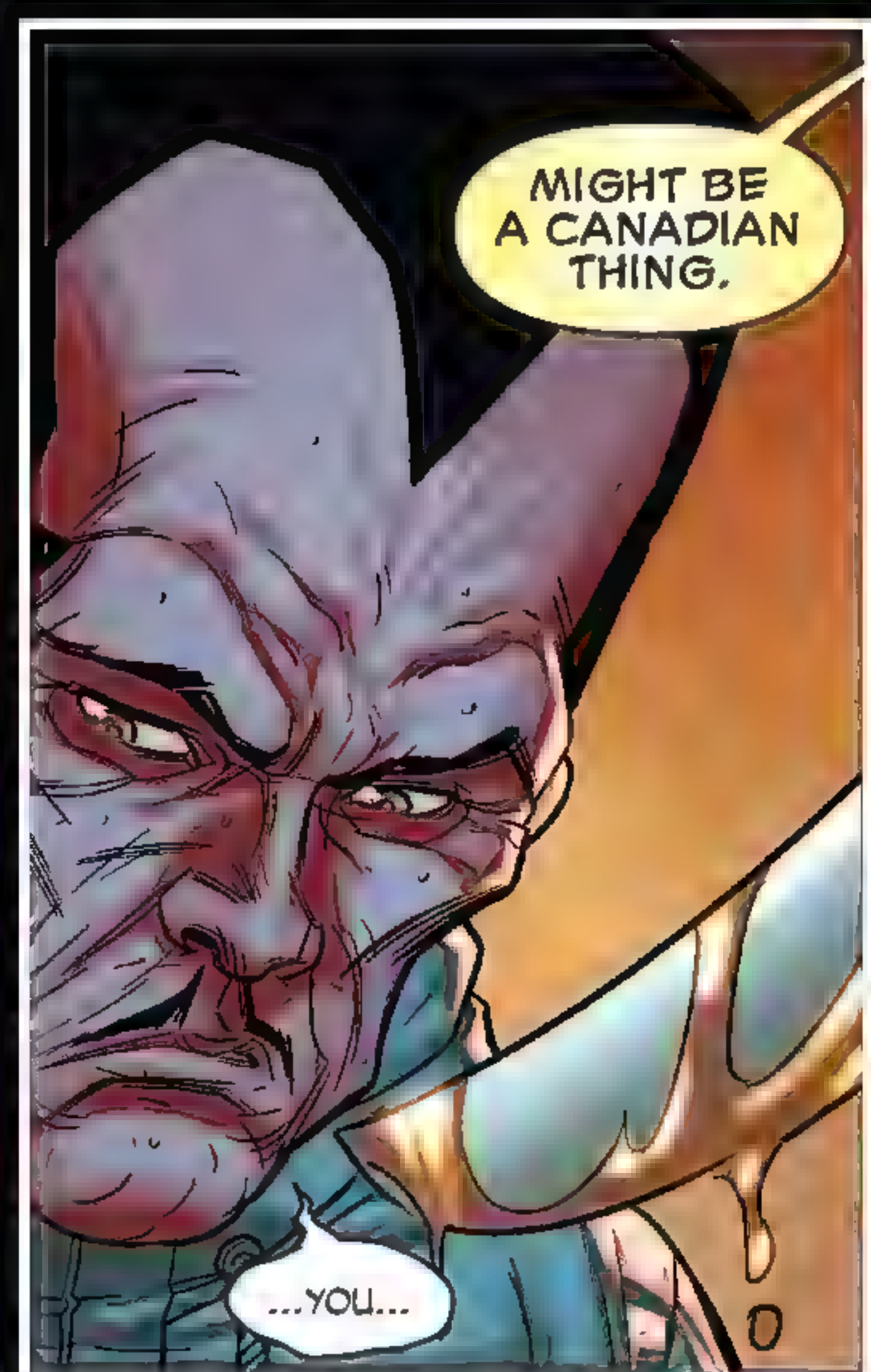
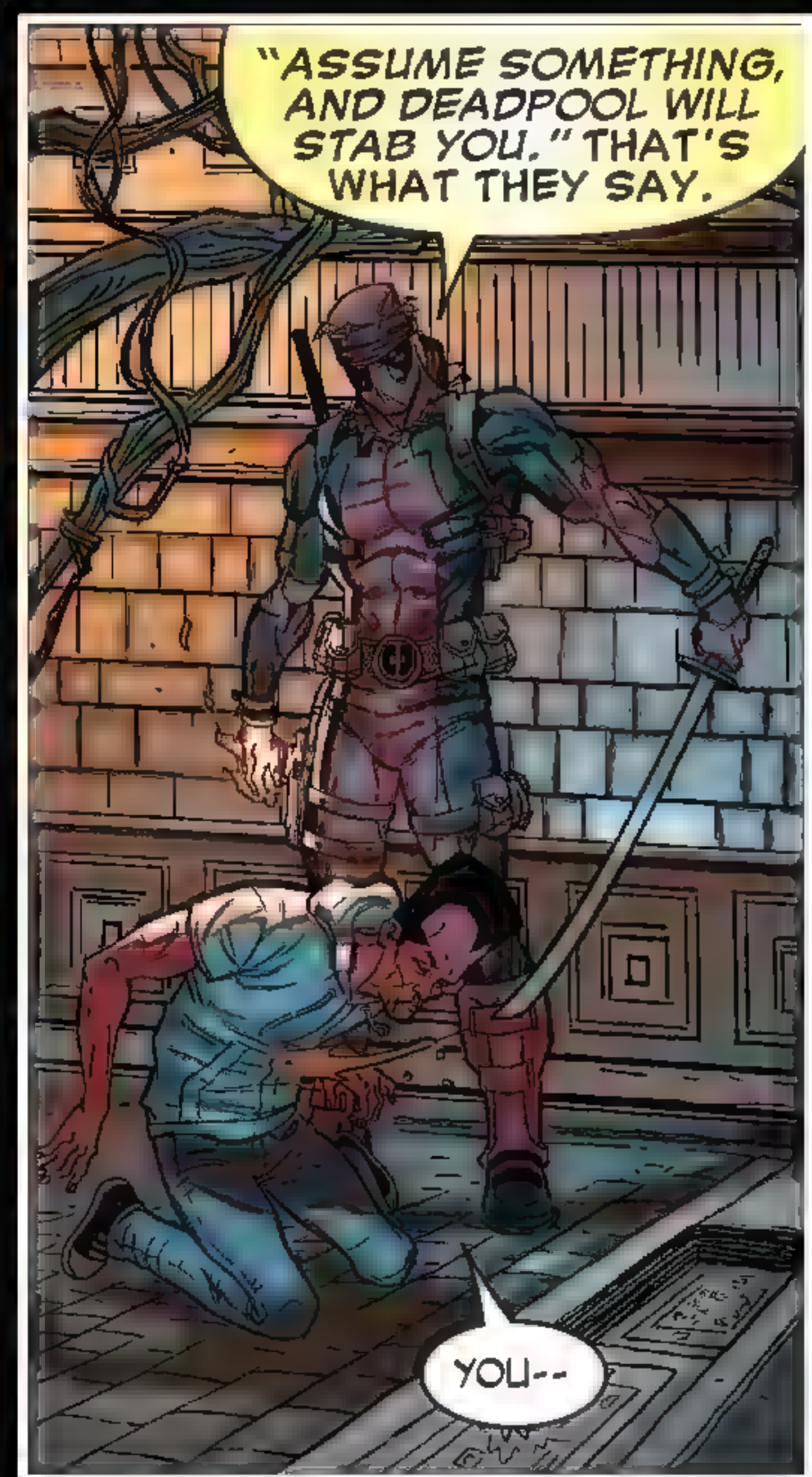
BUT I'M
NOT *DUMB*. AND
YOU'RE NOT
FRIENDLY.



I...



AND YOU
KNOW WHAT
THEY SAY
ABOUT PEOPLE
WHO *ASSUME*
THINGS...





WHOOOPS!



AAAGH!



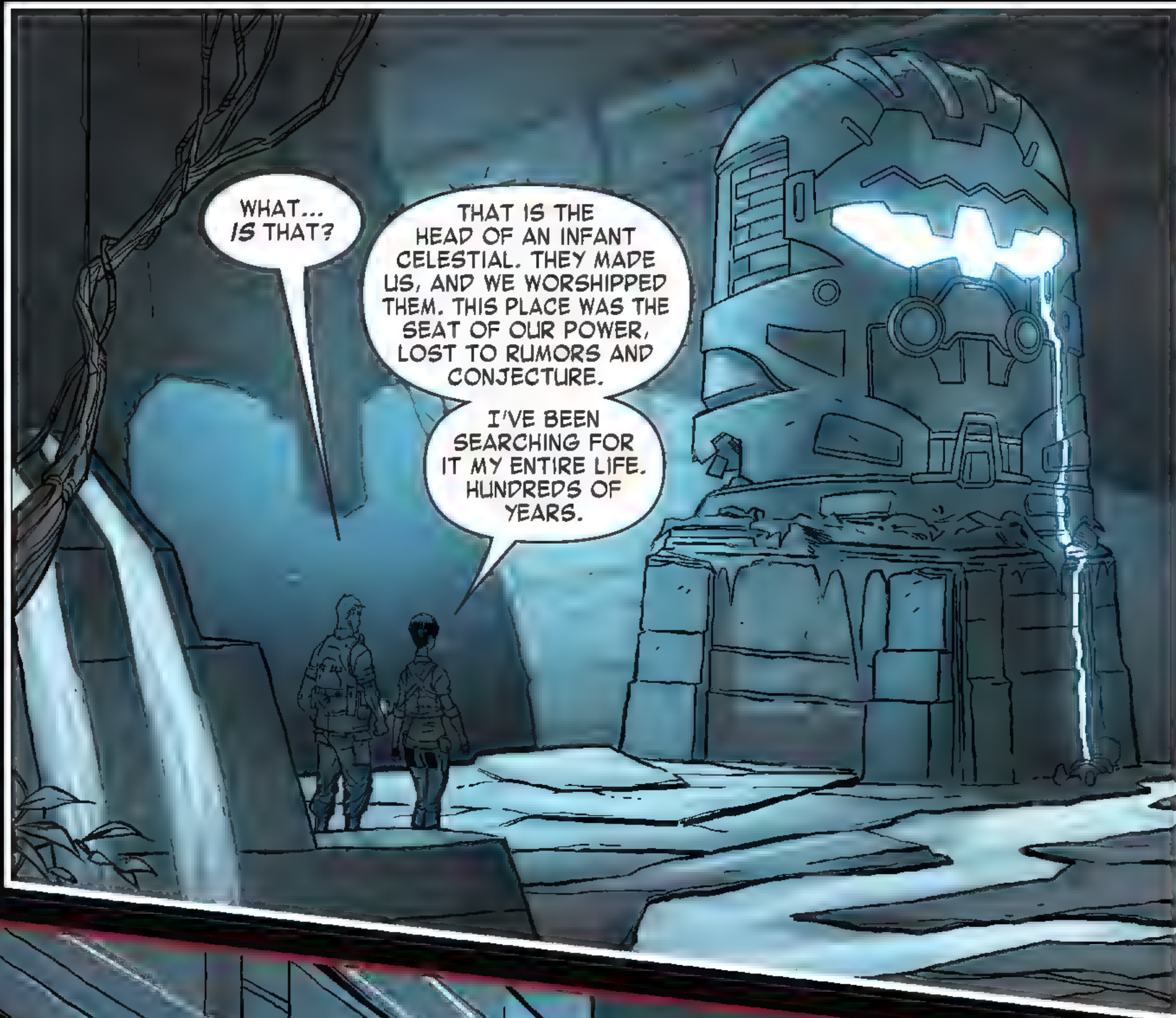
DUMB ENOUGH.



CENSORED



LET'S JUST...SEE...
WHAT WE CAN...
SEE.



WHAT...
IS THAT?

THAT IS THE
HEAD OF AN INFANT
CELESTIAL. THEY MADE
US, AND WE WORSHIPPED
THEM. THIS PLACE WAS THE
SEAT OF OUR POWER,
LOST TO RUMORS AND
CONJECTURE.

I'VE BEEN
SEARCHING FOR
IT MY ENTIRE LIFE.
HUNDREDS OF
YEARS.



WAIT.
DID YOU SAY
HUNDREDS?



I DID.

AAGH!

AND I
DON'T INTEND TO
SHARE IT.

STAB



OH, NO?

H-HOW?

YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO THAT PRESTO-CHANGE-O STUFF. WHAT ARE YOU, ANYWAY?



I AM A **DEVIANT**! ONE OF THE LAST OF MY KIND.

THE SPACE GODS CREATED MY PEOPLE MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO. WE WERE A **FAILED EXPERIMENT--** TO THEM.

SO WE **KILLED** ONE OF THEIR CHILDREN, PUT ITS HEAD HERE AND LET ITS BLOOD SLOWLY CHANGE THE WORLD INTO ONE THAT WE COULD **RULE**.

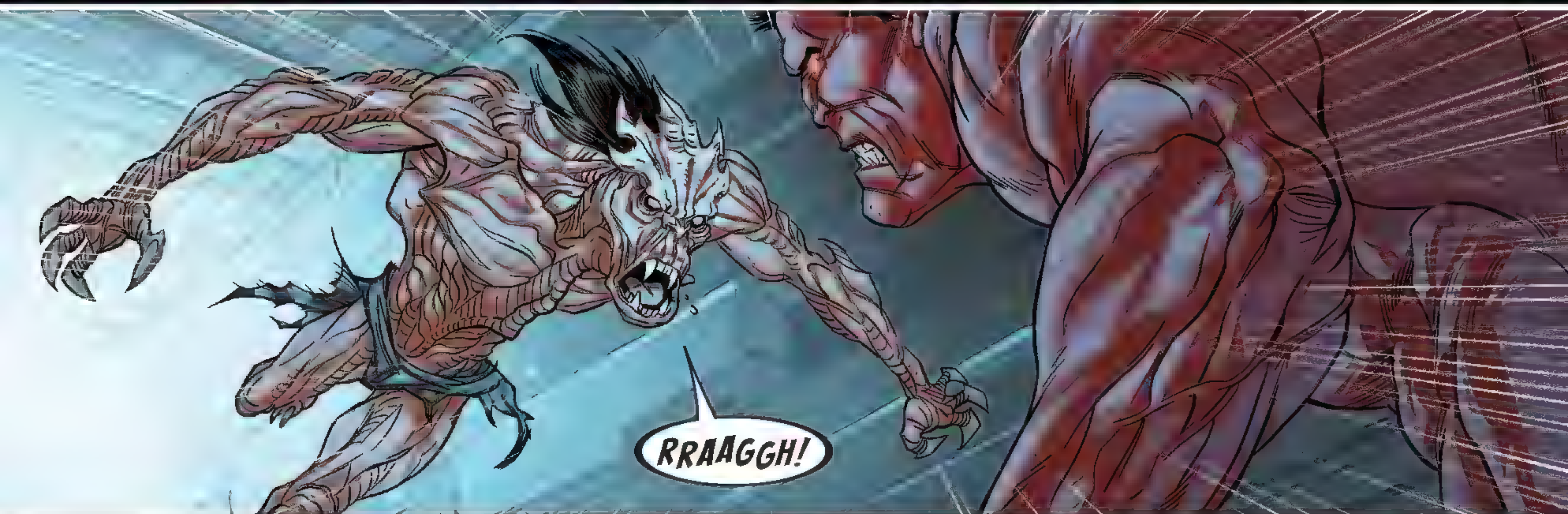
A WORLD OF **MONSTERS**.



IT WAS JUST A **LEGEND** AMONG THE **DEVIANTS**, A FAIRY TALE TO TELL OUR YOUNG--THE PROMISE OF A BETTER WORLD WE WERE NEVER ALLOWED TO HAVE.

AND ALL ALONG, IT WAS **TRUE**, AND IT WAS **WORKING**, UNTIL YOUR **TEAM** CAME ALONG AND STOPPED IT.

WHATEVER. I'VE HEARD THIS STUFF A MILLION TIMES BEFORE. ALL I'M THINKING RIGHT NOW IS, "UGH. I SLEPT WITH THAT **THING**."



RRAAGGH!



UH...



HELLO,
GENERAL.

MANCUSO?



IS THAT...
WHAT HAPPENED
TO YOU?

I FOUND WHAT
YOU SENT ME TO
FIND, GENERAL. YOU
WERE RIGHT. THERE
IS IMMENSE POWER
HERE.

MORE
THAN ENOUGH
TO DESTROY
A HULK.

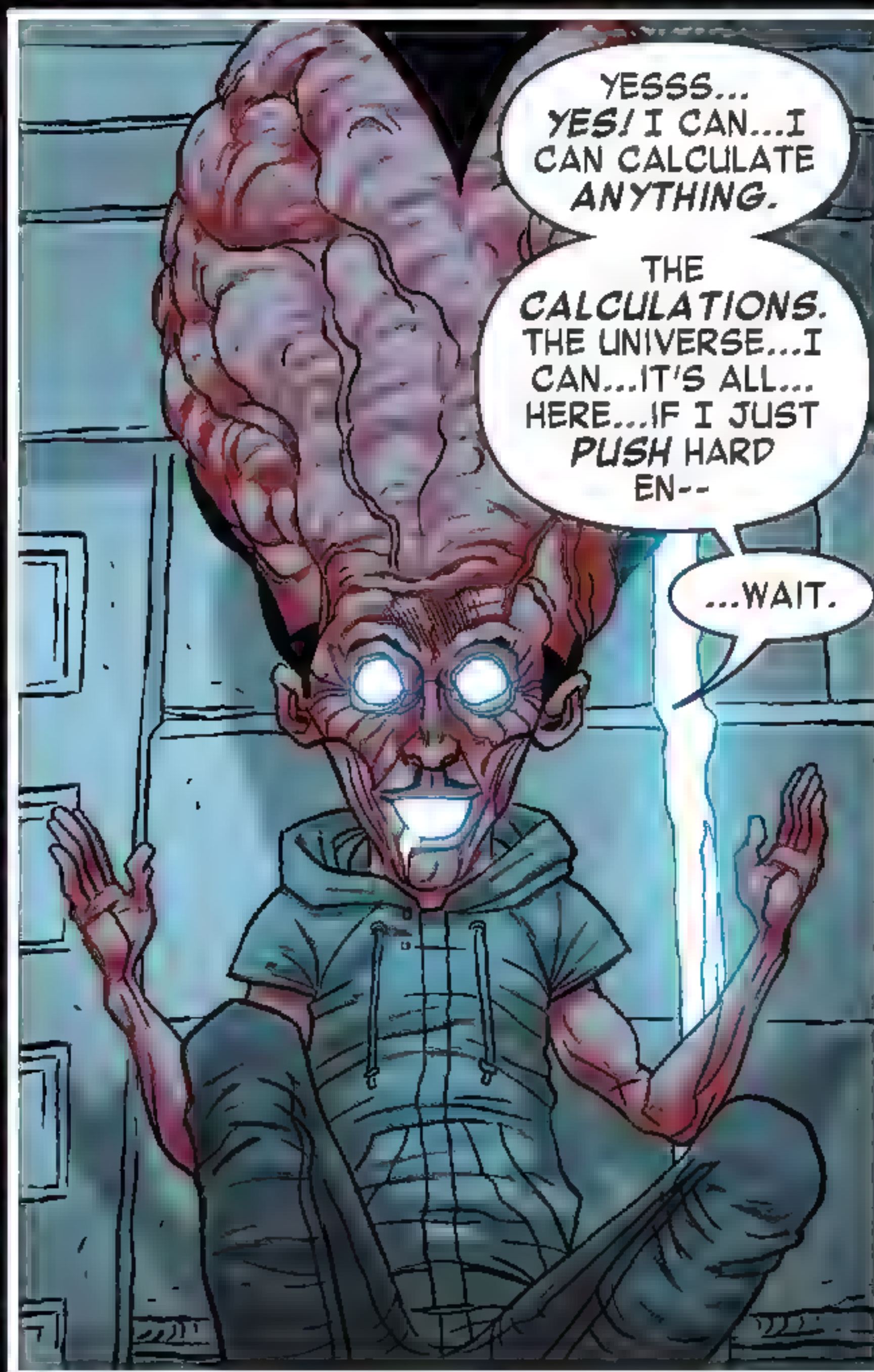
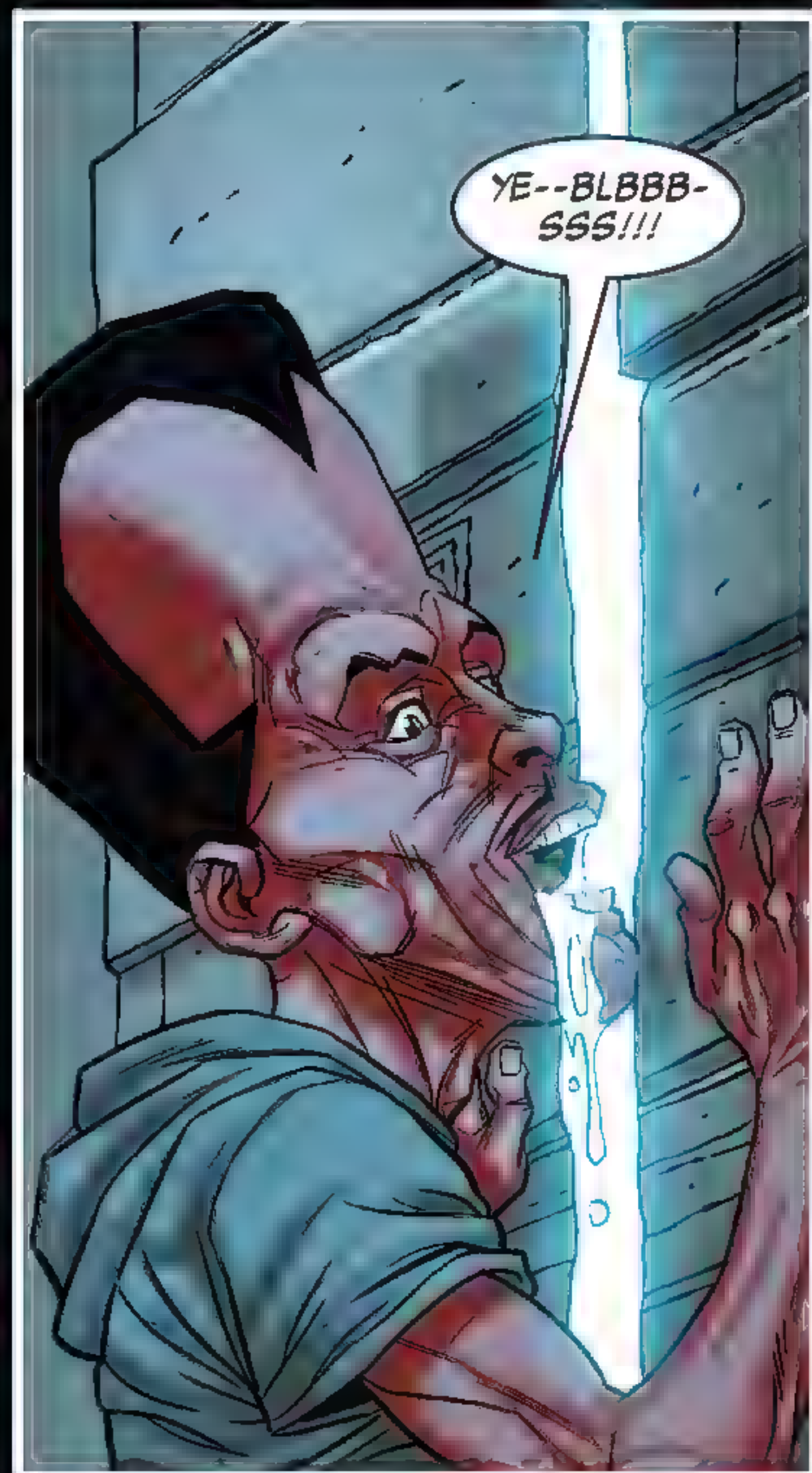
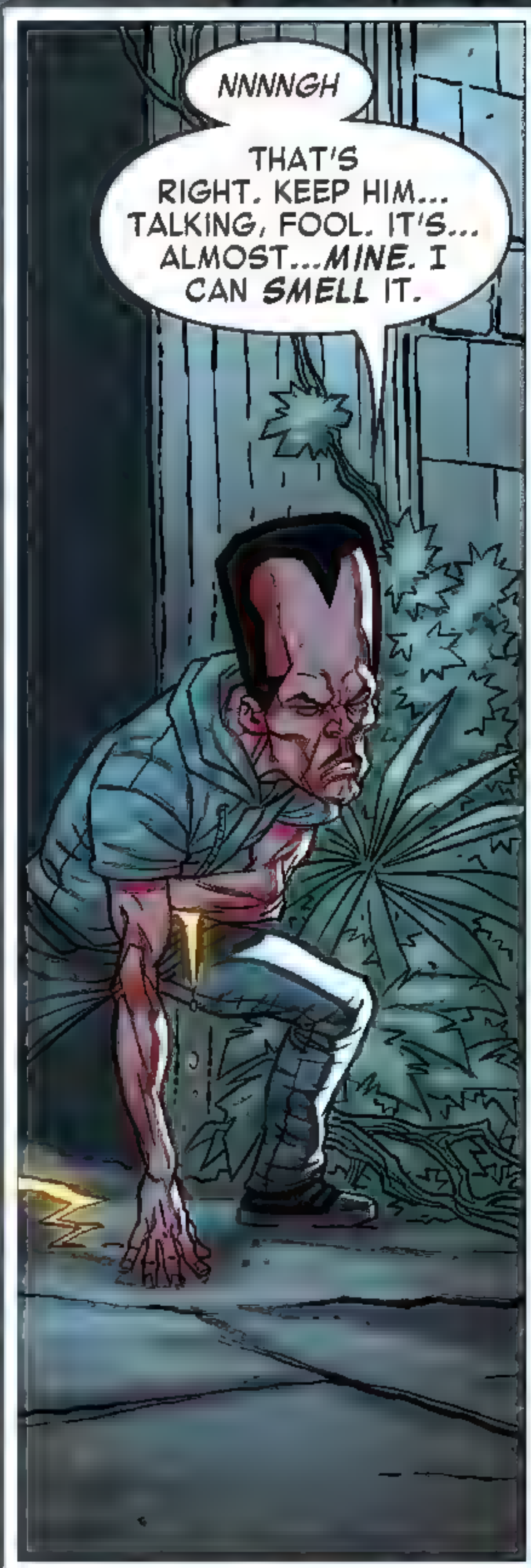


HARRING
AND PORTER, I'M
GUESSING? WHAT
HAPPENED TO
THEM?

I KILLED THEM.
WHEN WE FIRST MADE
IT INTO THE TEMPLE, THERE
WAS SOME...*DISCUSSION*
ABOUT WHO WOULD BE THE
FIRST TO TASTE THE
CELESTIAL'S BLOOD.
WE ALL WANTED IT.

YOU
MURDERED THEM.
YOUR OWN MEN.

YES. BUT I
AM PAST THAT
NOW.





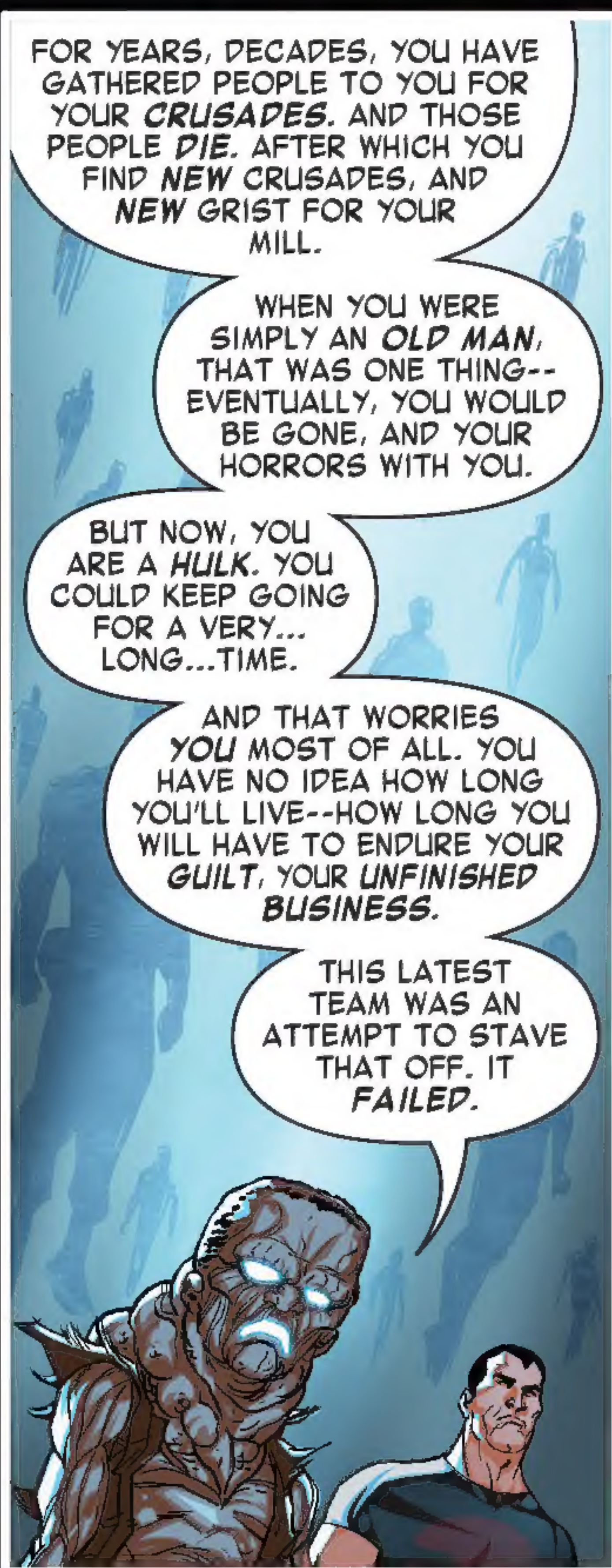
YOU GATHERED A TEAM TOGETHER IN AN EFFORT TO ATONE FOR YOUR PAST MISTAKES.

SEVEN KILLERS. ONE FLED BECAUSE HE FEARED WHAT YOU WERE TURNING HIM INTO, AND ANOTHER YOU REWARDED BY SENDING HER TO HELL. THE REST ARE DEAD.



NO...THEY AREN'T ALL...WHY ARE YOU SHOWING ME THIS? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

THAPPELUS ROSS, YOU ARE AN UNKILLABLE MONSTER.



FOR YEARS, DECADES, YOU HAVE GATHERED PEOPLE TO YOU FOR YOUR *CRUSADES*. AND THOSE PEOPLE *DIE*. AFTER WHICH YOU FIND *NEW CRUSADES*, AND *NEW GRIST* FOR YOUR MILL.

WHEN YOU WERE SIMPLY AN *OLD MAN*, THAT WAS ONE THING-- EVENTUALLY, YOU WOULD BE GONE, AND YOUR HORRORS WITH YOU.

BUT NOW, YOU ARE A *HULK*. YOU COULD KEEP GOING FOR A VERY... LONG...TIME.

AND THAT WORRIES YOU MOST OF ALL. YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW LONG YOU'LL LIVE--HOW LONG YOU WILL HAVE TO ENDURE YOUR GUILT, YOUR UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

THIS LATEST TEAM WAS AN ATTEMPT TO STAVE THAT OFF. IT *FAILED*.



SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST KILL ME, THEN? PUT ME OUT OF MY DAMN MISERY! ISN'T THAT WHY YOU BROUGHT ME HERE?

I *SHOULD*. AND YET...I CAN *SEE* THINGS NOW. I CAN SEE HOW EVERYTHING *FITS TOGETHER*.

I GET TO DECIDE WHAT THE PUZZLE WILL LOOK LIKE ONCE IT'S ASSEMBLED. I GET TO MAKE *CHOICES* NOW, GENERAL.

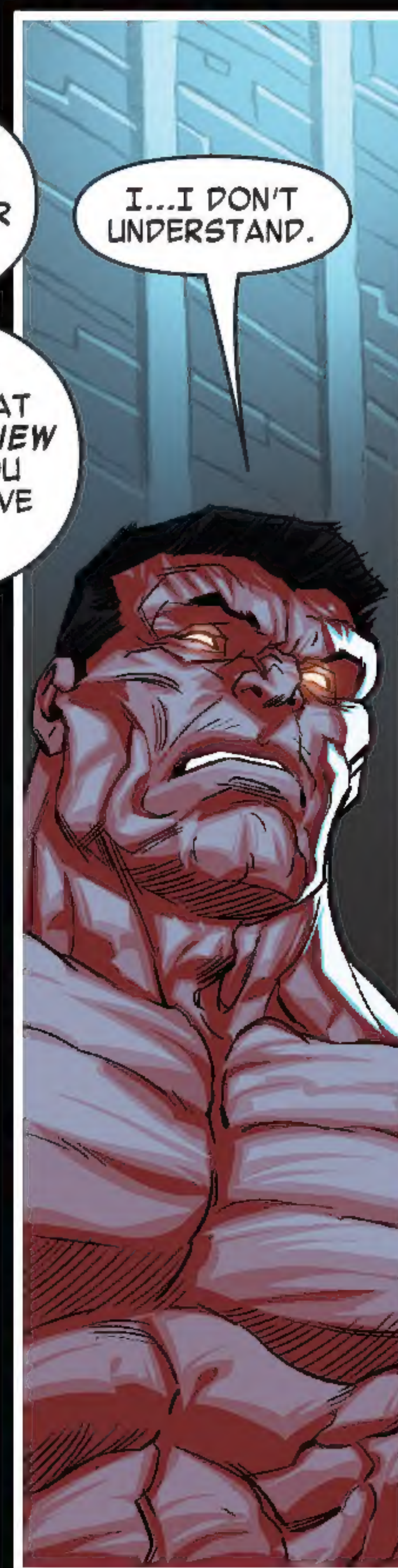
THAT IS WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE.



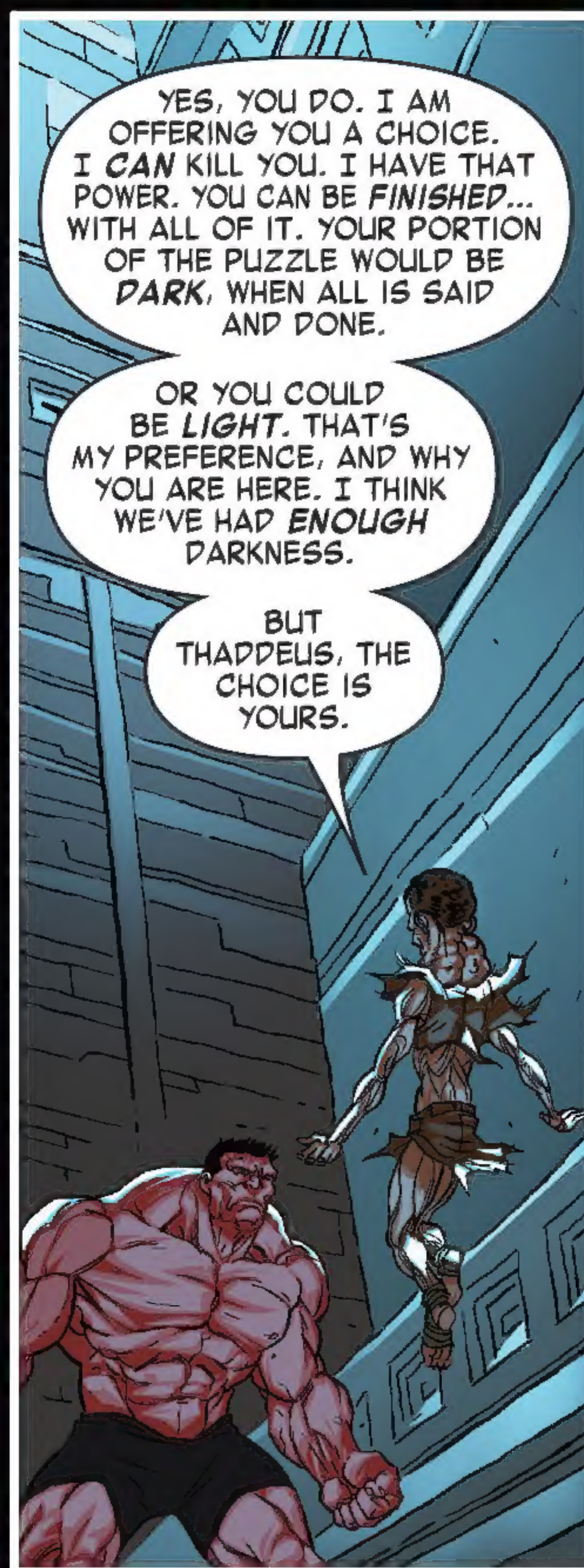
YOU ARE ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL BEINGS IN THE WORLD, AND NOT JUST BECAUSE OF YOUR STRENGTH. YOU ARE A *LEADER OF MEN*.

YOU USE YOUR IMMENSE POWER ONLY FOR *YOURSELF*. BUT WHAT IF YOU COULD TURN TO A *NEW PATH*? IMAGINE WHAT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE IF YOU TURNED THAT POWER *OUTWARDS*.

STOP BEING SO *%&*% SELFISH*, GENERAL.



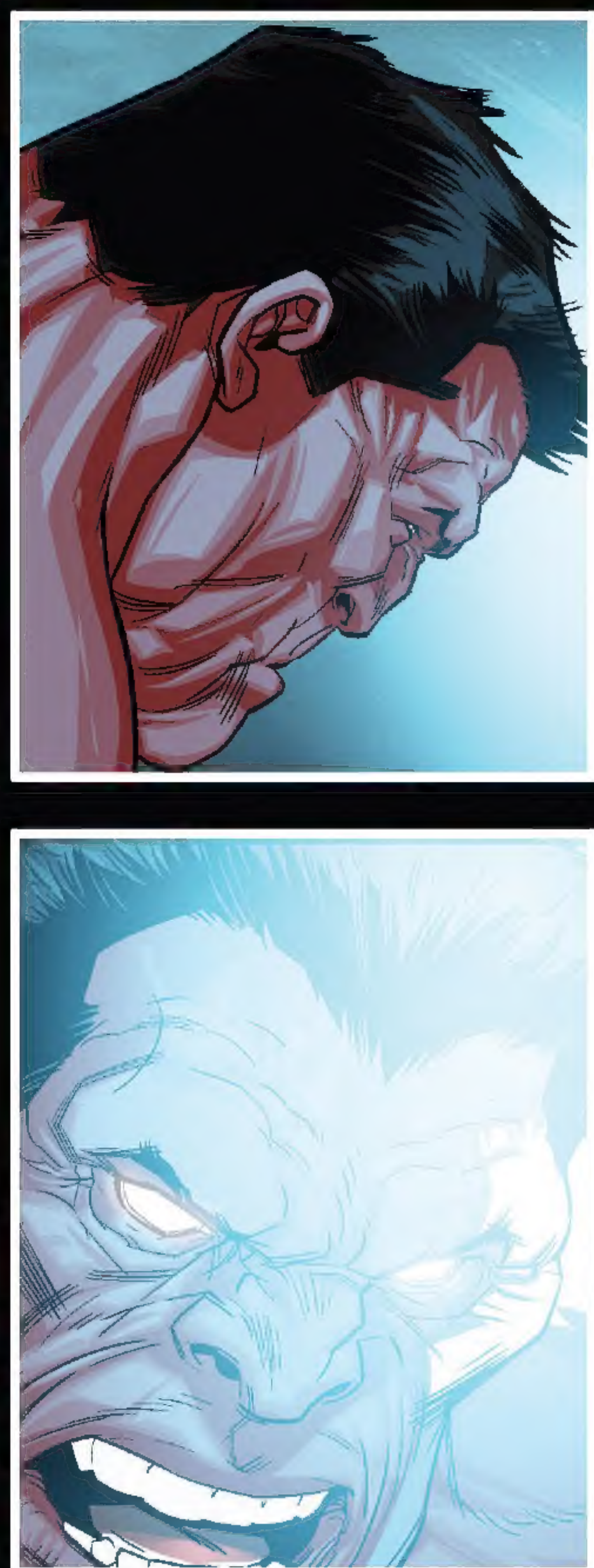
I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND.



YES, YOU DO. I AM OFFERING YOU A CHOICE. I *CAN* KILL YOU. I HAVE THAT POWER. YOU CAN BE *FINISHED*... WITH ALL OF IT. YOUR PORTION OF THE PUZZLE WOULD BE *DARK*, WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE.

OR YOU COULD BE *LIGHT*. THAT'S MY PREFERENCE, AND WHY YOU ARE HERE. I THINK WE'VE HAD *ENOUGH DARKNESS*.

BUT THAPPELUS, THE CHOICE IS YOURS.

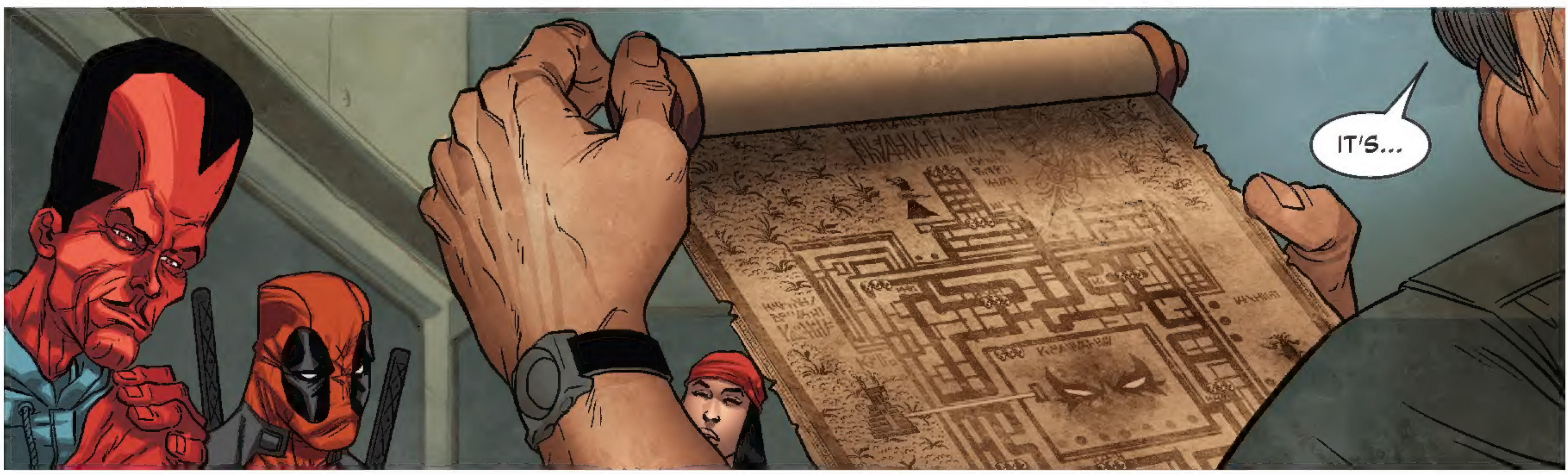




WHAT NOW, ROSS? IT'S YOUR CALL FOR THE NEXT MISSION, I THINK.

YEAH. I'VE GOT SOMETHING TEED UP IN CENTRAL AMERICA. HONDURAS.

SHOULD BE A PIECE OF CAKE. I THINK YOU'LL LIKE IT, ACTUALLY. IT'S...



IT'S...



NAH. LET'S TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

THE TEAM IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE TEAM! SEE YA, GUYS, IT'S BEEN FANTASTIC! --CDS

END.



"This comic series is good. Really good."
— IGN.com

GHOST RIDER JOINS THE THUNDERBOLTS!

General Ross recruited the T-Bolts to clean up the problems no one else could — but he didn't anticipate trouble with Mercy! The seemingly all-powerful madwoman is consumed with bloodlust and has begun slaughtering innocent people to fulfill her twisted mission. To stop her, Ross needs help from Johnny Blaze, the original Ghost Rider! Can the Spirit of Vengeance save the team before it all goes, quite literally, to hell? And when things go south, will the team make a deal with the devil to get home? Then, the Thunderbolts battle Venom! Finally, when an ancient cosmic power corrupts a former ally, the T-Bolts must travel deep into a Central American jungle. But the clock is ticking for the tempestuous team.

Collecting *Thunderbolts* (2012) #20-26 — written by Charles Soule, and illustrated by Carlo Barberi and Paco Diaz Luque with Kim Jacinto.

**PARENTAL
ADVISORY**

MARVEL

